

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PENTECOSTALISM:

A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF  
THE CHRISTCHURCH APOSTOLIC CHURCH

by

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Sociology  
In the University of Canterbury

1980

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#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr Arnold Parr, for his careful and discerning supervision of this thesis, and my second supervisor, Mr Bob Hall, for his helpful insights and suggestions. I am grateful to my colleagues, Chris Eichbaum, Alastair Wilkinson, Alison Williamson, Andrea Baker, and Kay Saville-Smith for their stimulation and encouragement. And finally, I wish to thank all the members of the Christchurch Apostolic Church, who, by their eagerness to see the finished product, spurred the work on.

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## ABSTRACT

The subject of this study is the Christchurch Apostolic Church, which is a Pentecostal church with approximately 300 members. Material from the fields of sociology of religion and collective behaviour is referred to, and a brief history of Pentecostalism is included. The church is seen as part of a social movement, Pentecostalism, and comments are made on the organization and functioning of social movements and motivations for participation. The research design included participant observation, a questionnaire, and interviews. The church was found to have grown rapidly during the 1970's and to have a preponderance of youthful members, most of whom had transferred from other churches. Church activities were marked by warmth, enthusiasm, informality, and a strong emphasis on individual participation. Ideology is found to be an important factor in determining the church's development, and this is a characteristic of the Pentecostal movement. Suggestions for further research are made.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Saturday nights the Christchurch Town Hall is full of people, listening to a rock concert or the Symphony Orchestra playing Beethoven, perhaps. The performance ends and the foyer fills with well-dressed people, discussing the music. Soon they have gone home, and the car park is empty. But less than twelve hours later, it is full of cars again. This time, many of them bear "One Way Jesus" stickers. Cheerful people, many of them young, hurry in through the foyer and towards the stairs to the Limes Room which now bear a sign "Church Patrons Only". A different type of music floats down the stairs, and then the sound of many people singing, and clapping to the music. What is the occasion for this gathering? What brings these people here regularly each Sunday morning? How did they discover this meeting, when many other have only been in the Town Hall on Friday and Saturday nights?

This thesis is a study of the Christchurch Apostolic Church, which is part of a national Pentecostal denomination. It includes an examination of the functioning of the church, including Sunday services in the Christchurch Town Hall Limes Room, and a look at the type of people who are involved in it.

The study arose out of a personal interest in the Christian church, and a desire to view it from a sociological perspective. The problem then became the selection of a suitable topic of an appropriate size for a master's thesis. Since I preferred to do



some participant observation rather than a wide-ranging survey, I chose to study a single church. The Christchurch Apostolic Church was chosen to be the subject of the study for a number of reasons. I had had some previous contact with the church through acquaintances who were members, and knew it to be a lively church that was changing and developing. It was a good size to study; a reasonably large number of members but not unmanageable. I had met the Pastor and knew he would be approachable. One fact that seemed most interesting was the rapid growth that the church had experienced over the past decade. This raised a number of questions: where had the people come from? Why had they come? Which aspect of the life of this particular church had greatest appeal? What does it mean to be a member of the church? Can any of these things be explained by overall social trends during the period, or is this church an isolated case with internal reasons for change?

The Christchurch Apostolic Church is the only one of its denomination in Christchurch and since it has a central location it draws members from around the city. As it is a Pentecostal church, studies of Pentecostalism can be referred to, and it can be seen as part of a wider social movement through a collective behaviour perspective.

The thesis begins with a history of the Pentecostal movement, and an examination of the relevant literature. This is followed by an explanation of how the research was carried out. Findings of the questionnaire and participant observation are described and discussed, and conclusions of the study are given.

The use of terms in this thesis is adapted from Neil (1974).

"Pentecostal churches" or "classical Pentecostalism" refers to the older movement outside the mainline churches. "Charismatic renewal" is that which is taking place within the mainline churches. "The Pentecostal movement" refers to the movement as a whole without distinction. "Mainline churches" refers to the historic churches, the denominations to which most New Zealanders belong: Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist. It is recognised that a variety of theological viewpoints are found within all these churches.

"A sociologist would tell us that the motives which prompt individuals and families to go to church are varied and complex. People are stirred by ideas, emotions and habits, by social custom, by a search for personal identity, by a need for support and approval from others, and by vague desires to find a purpose for living. From the standpoint of his own discipline, no doubt the sociologist's judgment is valid. His concern is with people's observable behaviour. But a Christian cannot interpret their coming together solely in behaviourist terms. Because of his faith in a God who speaks and acts, he sees the coming together of a congregation as the work of the Holy Spirit. For him these men and women are responding - in ways that differ with each individual - to the call of God. The motives attributed to them by the sociologist may well be elements in their response, but they do not provide the ultimate explanation for the existence of a local church. God moves in many mysterious ways - including those human promptings and aspirations which the sociologist can detect."

(Gunstone, 1978, p 24)

## CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to consider the previous research that has been done in the sociology of Pentecostal groups, and to provide a theoretical perspective for the study.

In order to understand a Pentecostal church in 1978, it is helpful to have some background information on the Pentecostal movement, especially in New Zealand, and also to have comparative material on church organization and functioning. A discussion of the process of joining a movement is also relevant. In considering these points literature from the fields of sociology of religion and collective behaviour will be used. The sociology of religion is the study of the social conditions and consequences associated with religious beliefs, and collective behaviour is concerned with the development of new groups.

### Historical Growth of Pentecostalism

#### Origins

The Pentecostal movement is generally considered to have arisen out of the nineteenth century Holiness movement, which, in turn, grew out of Methodism. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, taught a doctrine of sanctification, following conversion, as a "second work of grace", and emphasised conscious religious experience. This doctrine of entire sanctification was taken to America with Methodism and flourished there, especially after the Civil War when a renewed emphasis on sanctification was seen as a means of recovering the declining vitality of

Methodism. From this, a number of holiness denominations were formed. Those involved in this movement taught that there was a second experience which followed conversion, and referred to it as the baptism with the Holy Spirit (Hummel, 1978, pp 55-56). This movement is distinguishable from Pentecostalism, however, in that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was to the Holiness Movement an entirely subjective experience, not involving glossolalia or other gifts of the Holy Spirit, because these were considered to have been confined to apostolic times (Wilson, 1961, p 31).

#### Classical Pentecostalism

The era that has been described as classical Pentecostalism began in January 1901 when the link was made between the baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues (glossolalia), both in theory and in practice. Students at Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas, studied the Bible and found that evidence in the scriptures for receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit was speaking in other tongues, and when Charles Parham, the college leader, laid hands on a young girl for the baptism with the Spirit she immediately began to speak in tongues. From this point, the message spread quickly in America, especially with the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles which attracted thousands of visitors in the three years 1906-8.

In Britain, the Welsh revival of 1904, led by Evan Roberts, was another notable event in the beginnings of Pentecostalism. Thirty thousand people were converted and twenty thousand became new church members in this revival, according to Hummel

(1978, p 41) and some converts broke forth into fluent Welsh prayers although they did not normally speak Welsh (Wilson, 1961, p 21).

The distinctive element of the Pentecostal movement is the teaching that glossolalia, or speaking in tongues, is the initial physical evidence of baptism with the Holy Spirit. This was rejected by both mainline churches and many of the Holiness churches. Because of this, and also because of Pentecostal hostility toward higher education and formally educated ministers, a number of Pentecostal denominations were formed, the largest being the Assemblies of God. The first half of the twentieth century saw many disputes and divisions among Pentecostal groups over doctrine, church government, finances, and co-operation with other denominations, causing churches to rise and fall in size and to split up (Hummel, 1978, pp 42-3). Synan (1971, p 185) comments that the history of Pentecostals in American society is similar to that of Methodists and Baptists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They all began as total outcasts in society, later gained a status of suspicious toleration, and were finally accepted by the community. The early Pentecostals rejected society because they believed it to be corrupt, wicked, hostile and hopelessly lost, while society rejected the Pentecostals because it believed them to be insanely fanatical, self-righteous, doctrinally in error and emotionally unstable. "In such an atmosphere it was inevitable that much prejudice, hostility, and suspicion would mar the relationship of the early Pentecostals to society at large." (Synan, 1971, p 185)

The movement attracted many people with unorthodox and "odd" opinions about religion whose actions added a grain of truth to falsehoods in circulation (Synan, 1971, p 186).

By 1930, Synan asserts, trends in Pentecostalism were clear. The greatest appeal of Pentecostalism was to the lower classes, for whom the major characteristics of Pentecostal worship (emotional fervour, informality, lay clergy, millenarianism, strict ethical standards) had a strong appeal. Pentecostalism later became more middle class through its adherents rising economically (Synan, 1971, p 200).

#### Neo-Pentecostalism

In the 1950s a new phase of Pentecostalism began when members of mainline churches started to discover and experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Influential figure in spreading the message were David Du Plessis and Dennis Bennett, both of whom spoke widely about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. People from a variety of church backgrounds became involved in this charismatic renewal, and there were a number of different results for church groups. Some churches participated in the renewal as a whole, developing the use of the spiritual gifts (wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, tongues and interpretation, as listed in 1 Corinthians 12), while others rejected the charismatic renewal, forcing some ministers to resign, and pressuring individual members to leave. Many neo-Pentecostals turned to the classical Pentecostal churches and to groups like the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International. Large numbers

of independent churches were formed, some of them with memberships of several hundreds, and others of only a few families (Gerlach & Hine, 1970, p 3). Although many have moved to Pentecostal churches, there are many charismatics who remain in the mainline churches. These people are referred to by Gerlach and Hine as "hidden" because statistically they appear as members of their denomination rather than as Pentecostals. While they participate in the normal activities of their church, they are also usually involved in weekly meetings for prayer and praise, Bible study, mutual encouragement and exercise of spiritual gifts (Hummel, 1978, p 47).

In the 1960's and 1970's many major American denominations appointed committees to study the charismatic renewal, with varied results. Often the committees' enquiries included investigation of the psychological standing of Pentecostalism and recommendations for church practice, some more positive than others. (For an examination of the findings of the various churches, see McDonnell, 1976, Chapter 3, Enthusiasm and Institution: The Responses of the Churches).

#### Catholic Charismatic Renewal

In the late 1960's, the charismatic movement began to affect the Roman Catholic church in the United States, spreading especially among university students, priests and nuns. McDonnell considers that the Catholic charismatic movement, by the public identification of trained theologians and scholars with the movement, added a new dimension which Protestant neo-Pentecostalism lacked. He lists a number of professors and bishops who are



personally involved, and concludes that as a result of this, and of professional and business people in the Protestant neo-Pentecostal movement, the charismatic renewal can no longer be dismissed as a response to cultural or economic deprivation, or described as typically sectarian in character (McDonnell, 1976, pp 15-16).

By 1970 it was generally conceded that the Pentecostal churches were among the fastest growing Christian communities in the world. It was clear that they were appealing to "an ever-widening spectrum of America's citizens" (Synan, 1971, p 223). This phenomenal growth resulted in a change of the attitude of other churches from "mere toleration to active interest" according to Synan. Protestant thinking was summarised in the question "What can we learn from the Pentecostal churches?", the title of a magazine article. Synan considers this attitude signified that a new era of acceptance and co-operation was replacing an era of passive toleration which had begun in the mid 1920's (Synan, 1971, p 224).

#### Pentecostalism and Charismatic Renewal in New Zealand

The pattern of development of Pentecostalism in New Zealand is similar to that already described in other countries, and indeed has been strongly influenced by overseas events and personnel. Although Pentecostalism had become established in Britain and America in the early years of this century, it was not until the 1920's that it became a recognisable force in New Zealand.

The 1920's were years of change and uncertainty for New Zealand

following the First World War, and the spiritual climate was dominated by the rise of the Ratana Movement, which resulted in renewed faith and hope among the Maori people and also promoted an interest in spiritual healing for many mainline Protestants. Thus, when Smith Wigglesworth visited New Zealand in 1922 and performed some remarkable healings, there was such public interest that classical Pentecostalism became a recognisable and organised body (Neil, 1974, p 80). The "Wellington City Mission" which was the first official Pentecostal body to be registered in New Zealand was organised through his efforts and inspiration. This was followed by the founding of other Pentecostal churches: the Assemblies of God General Council in New Zealand (1927), the Apostolic Church in New Zealand (1933), and the New Zealand Pentecostal Church (1924) which amalgamated with the Assemblies of God in 1935 (Neil, 1974, p 80).

In the years that followed, strong overseas links continued, but local developments were marked by "continual internal strife and rapid disintegration and fragmentation into many small independent assemblies" so that by 1960 there were 54 Pentecostal churches in New Zealand, mostly unaffiliated with any national or international Pentecostal organizations (Neil, 1974, p 81). One of these churches was the Christchurch Apostolic Church which had been set up in the 1930's when Apostolic churches had been established in most of New Zealand's main centres. In 1943 the New Zealand Apostolic Church became autonomous, having been until then a subsidiary of the Apostolic Church in Great Britain, which was a product of the Welsh Revival of 1904. The Christchurch branch remained comparatively small, meeting in various halls round the central city until a chapel was built in Colombo

Street adjacent to Christchurch Women's Hospital in 1960.

(Worsfold, 1974, p 253).

Through the 1960's interest in the work of the Holy Spirit increased among those in mainline churches as news spread of happenings in America. Dennis Bennett, an Episcopalian priest, was forced to leave his church in California after testifying to his baptism in the Holy Spirit, and David Wilkerson described his work with drug addicts in New York and his Pentecostal experiences in The Cross and the Switchblade, a book which has been read by people all round the world and has been extremely influential in spreading the Pentecostal message. There were also unfavourable reports from America, telling of the divisiveness of the movement. In Christchurch, most of those from mainline churches who were baptised in the Holy Spirit came into this experience through the classical Pentecostal churches, and many left their churches to join a Pentecostal church, either because they were forced out, or because they felt more freedom to express their faith in a new setting (Neil, 1974, pp 83-93).

In 1966 Dennis Bennett visited New Zealand, and this was a significant event for the charismatic movement in the Anglican church because he was taken seriously by many theologians, clergy and lay people, and the movement spread. Within the mainline churches there was a reaction against the movement from those who saw a danger of delusion and a threat to established practice. Problems tended to occur when people tried to transfer the practices of Pentecostalism, which Neil refers to as

"cultural baggage", to the mainline churches (Neil, 1974, p 107). He describes the period 1967-71 as the "hey-day" for independent Pentecostals and the Assemblies of God, especially in Auckland and Christchurch, when many charismatic Christians from mainline churches attended the Pentecostal churches for fellowship and teaching, and many still do (Neil, 1974, pp 109-110). In this period the message that charismatic Christians should "come out" of the mainline churches was strongly preached by some, and many responded to this. The charismatic renewal in the mainline churches in Christchurch gained momentum in 1972, according to Neil (1974, p 128) and he considers that the Christian Advance Ministries Summer Schools and the use of the Life in the Spirit Seminars have helped to strengthen the movement.

In the last few years the influence of the major Pentecostal churches on the Christchurch scene has continued. The New Life Centre in particular has had an important role in promoting Pentecostal teaching, and there is a high level of awareness of Pentecostalism in Christian circles, often promoted by individuals as well as groups.

### Process of Joining: Motivations for Participation

From its early days, Pentecostalism has attracted much research interest, especially in America. As well as a large amount of psychological research, much of it attempting to discredit the experiences of Pentecostals or to show that only maladjusted people were involved, a number of researchers have studied the movement and groups within it in an effort to explain the causes or conditions that give rise to such groups and the reasons people join. The different types of explanation that have been offered will be examined under four headings: deprivation, search for identity, primary group ties, and charismatic leadership.

#### Deprivation

The most common explanation to be applied to the growth of Pentecostalism is that participants have felt some lack in their lives, and have perceived the movement as a means of satisfying their needs. Turner and Killian (1972, p 247) comment that although deprivation often helps to supply the intense motivation necessary for overcoming obstacles to movement membership, frustration by itself is never a guarantee of receptivity to movements. Long-continued frustration is characteristically seen to lead to hopelessness and preoccupation with the problems of survival which reduce the probability of participation in any reform. Those who are most in need are not the most likely to participate in a social movement: rather it is those who are experiencing frustration from recent losses or the experience of improving conditions who tend to be the most receptive.

Turner and Killian also discuss what they call personal status movements, which assist members to attain higher status within society, or give them a new basis for reinterpreting their own position in the larger society. Crucial frustrating aspects of an individual's life such as loneliness or lack of a sense of personal worth may be altered by active membership in a vital group. They suggest that religious groups reorient members to the present society by redefining the individual's value scheme, supplanting his old reference groups with new ones representing new values. They give as an example a study by Anton Boisen of the "Holy Rollers" (or Pentecostals) in which he describes how members of this type of group reorient themselves within a gratifying small world which replaces the frustrating larger world (Turner and Killian, 1957, pp 415-420).

Another common type of explanation of Pentecostalism is associated with the field of abnormal psychology: early research saw participants as psychologically as well as socially and economically deprived. It was argued that Pentecostalism appealed to people of a certain personality type only. Research tended to focus on glossolalia and attempted to link it with schizophrenia, hysteria and neuroticism (McDonnell, 1976, p 107). Turner and Killian list five types of personal characteristic that some would consider related to participation-proneness in social movements: imperviousness to social isolation, a desire for martyrdom, authoritarian types, sense of personal inadequacy, and a tendency to see issues in simple "black and white" terms (Turner and Killian, 1957, p 440-441).

As neo-Pentecostalism developed in the 1960's, more middle class people became participants in the movement, and as McDonnell states: "During the period 1967-1975 glossolalia and other kinds of prophetic behaviour became less and less socially unacceptable when judged by the dominant middle class values." (1976, p 112) Because the movement was perceived differently in this period, a different type of research was carried out, with a more open attitude on the part of the researchers towards Pentecostalism. One example is Gerlach and Hine's study People, Power, Change (1970). They commented that while many of their informants had been dissatisfied with their earlier religious experiences, finding most church activities meaningless, feeling that there was "something missing" in ritual observances, and feeling a desire for a closer relationship with God, they did not consider this discontent or any of the sociological or psychological determinants which might be attributed to it were sufficient by themselves to cause an individual to become involved in the process of commitment to Pentecostalism. In addition, they observed that in many cases, the discontent arose for informants after a friend or relative experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit and succeeded in making them sensitive to it (1970, p 110).

Related to theories of deprivation is the ideology of personal access to power which Gerlach and Hine consider is clearly expressed in Pentecostalism: "there is direct individual access to the source of spiritual power, wisdom, and authority" (1970, p 42). Participants see themselves as powerless and reliant on God as a source of power who enables them to act without a restrictive sense of personal responsibility (1970, p 164).

### Search for Identity

Another type of explanation for participation in social movements focusses on what the individual gains by participating. Orrin Klapp has argued that the collective search for identity is the central preoccupation of modern society. Turner and Killian consider that this is observable in most social movements in the latter half of the twentieth century (1972, p 371). Social movements fulfil the need for identity by providing opportunities for self-rectification, supplying a means for acting out the personal problems of their adherents, and even, it has been argued, inadvertantly providing a form of psychotherapy. Turner and Killian cite a study by Kiev of West Indian immigrants in England as members of Pentecostal sects, which argues there is psychotherapeutic value in involvement. During services, individuals lose self-awareness and have a sense of merging with the group which Kiev considered "seems to contribute to an increase of positive good feelings, elation and sometimes exaltation which may contribute to the psychotherapeutic efficacy of the meetings" (Turner and Killian, 1972, p 371). Turner and Killian also note that young people are particularly prone to use movements to act out the identity problems common to their age group.

Herbert Blumer distinguishes between adherence to a movement because of the gratification of participation, and adherence because of a belief in the programme and ideology of the movement. Related to the former is esprit de corps, "the sense which people have of being identified with one another in a common undertaking" (Turner and Killian, 1972, p 335), which gives



life, enthusiasm and vigour to a movement, and feeds on success. Morale, on the other hand, is a shared conviction concerning the worth of the group goal and a confidence in the eventual success of the group, and gives persistency and determination to a movement. Blumer suggests that esprit de corps is developed through use of three techniques: the development of a sense of separation of the group from the rest of society, the formation of an informal fellowship association, which usually involves the development of a network of primary groups, and participation on formal ceremonial behaviour. Development of their own rituals, signs, gestures and songs allows members to identify with one another, and provides a means for jointly renewing the pledge to the cause (Turner and Killian, 1972, pp 335-6).

#### Primary Group Ties

Gerlach and Hine consider that most analyses of social movements overlook the fact that the original decision of an individual to join a movement required some contact with the movement. In their research they found few cases in which the original contact with Pentecostalism was not a personal one, and this almost always involved a significant, pre-existing relationship - a relative, a close friend, a neighbour, an influential associate of some sort with whom the new convert had had meaningful interaction prior to recruitment (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 79). The type of person involved in recruitment was found to change according to type of Pentecostal group. Relatives recruited 71% of Gerlach and Hine's sample of established Pentecostal sect members, but the percentage of

members who have been recruited by relatives declines through large independent groups of fifteen to twenty years' duration and recently organized independent smaller groups, to only 32% of the "hiddens", those Pentecostals who remain in mainline churches. Parents are most important at the sect end of the continuum, and spouses the most important at the "hidden" end. Friends as recruiters increase in importance as relatives decrease (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 81). This can be further qualified by the introduction of frequent interaction and a positive relationship as factors that increase the likelihood of an individual's being recruited.

Gerlach and Hine allow that deprivation or social disorganization may predispose people to join a movement, but they found in the course of their field observations that close association with a committed participant is empirically far more explanatory. They give the example of a Pentecostal church in an economically deprived area which, although it had a highly charismatic minister, was not growing because the membership already included recruitable relatives of the original core group. Zealous recruitment efforts on strangers living in the vicinity were unsuccessful (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 82).

Another finding from Gerlach and Hine's research is that individuals are recruited not to a movement as a whole but rather to a cell within a movement. Pentecostals see themselves as members of a specific church, a prayer or Bible study group or a sub-group within a non-Pentecostal church, rather than as members of the Pentecostal movement, and have varying levels of

awareness of and interest in the movement as a whole and other cells in it (1970, p 95).

The recruitment process, according to Gerlach and Hine (1970, p 97), is largely initiated by lay members of cell groups at the grass roots level rather than by noted leaders, although such leaders may be instrumental in the consummation of the commitment process. When such evangelistic face-to-face recruitment by committed participants begins, the movement may spread into groups and areas where its generating conditions do not exist.

#### Charismatic Leadership

The term "charisma" was used by Weber to refer to the supernatural endowment of the leader. The leader attracts his followers by demonstrating his powers to perform miracles, signs or proofs, and if the leader loses this ability he will also lose his following. In a more secular sense, charisma denotes the personal qualities of a leader: the extraordinary, but not supernatural, talents of the magnetic personality who attracts a following on the basis of his personal attributes (Spencer, 1973, pp 341-2).

There is a possibility of confusion in applying the term "charismatic" to leadership in the Pentecostal movement because within the movement the term is used in a similar sense to the supernatural sense stated above, but more specifically defined, relating to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Gerlach and Hine comment that many studies of movement dynamics have been hindered by the limitations of a model which places the charismatic leader as the hub of a wheel, with the spokes as inner circle

disciples and the rim as the larger circle of followers. They found that in both Pentecostalism and the Black Power movement the charismatic leader strengthens those he influences, inspiring them to work on their own initiative rather than using his power to obtain devoted obedience. Thus individual Pentecostals are charismatic to the degree that they believe that they have been granted the "power to witness for the Lord" and to the degree that others come to believe them to be agents of the divine will (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 39). Gerlach and Hine found a large number of individuals at national, regional and local levels in the Pentecostal movement who fitted the definition of charismatic leader, and so concluded that if the spread of the movement is to be explained in terms of the influence of a charismatic individual, the meaning of charisma must be broadened so that it also refers to the recruitment activities of the humblest of movement participants (1970, p 91).

Gerlach and Hine also comment that people who are opposed to a movement often err in assuming that imprisoning or otherwise removing the most obviously charismatic leaders will inhibit the spread of the movement, and explain that this is not true because the leader's commitment is passed on to his followers so that they are no longer dependent on him and the movement does not need him to continue (1970, p 106).

### Organization: Structure

Material about the structure of social movements can be divided into three categories, relating to leadership, membership, and the structure of the movement as a whole.

### Overall Structure

Decentralization, segmentation and reticulation are terms which Gerlach and Hine consider describe the organization of the Pentecostal movement. Although some outside observers assume the movement to be a collection of sects within a national organization, there is no formal structure that ties different groups together, and as Gerlach and Hine point out, there are distinct types of groups, from the long-established sects through more recently established independent groups, to groups that are hidden within mainline churches. Links between all these different groups exist, but not in the form of centralized leadership and decision-making (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, pp 4, 35-37).

"Segmentation" refers to the fact that the movement is composed of a great variety of localised groups or cells. Although these are essentially independent, from time to time they combine to form larger configurations or divide to form smaller units. This constant dynamic rearrangement means that the movement is difficult to pin down for outsiders. Each cell tends to develop its own style, its own ideas about how to achieve the more general objectives of the movement, and its own interpretation of movement ideology (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, pp 41-42).

"Reticulation" indicates the way in which the cells are linked together in a network, through intersecting sets of personal relationships and other intergroup linkages rather than through any central point. Gerlach and Hine identify six types of ties within the Pentecostal movement as a whole. The first of these is personal ties between members; kinship, friendship and relationships formed from having participated in the same activities at some time.

Similar ties between leaders link groups together in close association, and this may occur either locally or between different areas. Travelling evangelists also draw groups together, so that members of one church may attend another one to hear a well-known speaker, and the evangelists may bring news of what is happening in other groups in other centres. Unifying events like revival meetings or "missions" may also draw groups together.

Another type of link between groups is large-scale nationally-organized associations with members who are also members of local cells. The most significant Pentecostal organization of this type is the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI), an international organization which aims to build up men to take leadership roles in their own churches, and to spread Pentecostal teaching. Its members come from all types of Pentecostal churches and mainline denominations.

All Pentecostal groups, despite many differences, have a common ideological basis in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and this

links groups which are organizationally disparate. The ideology is communicated across the network by the travelling evangelists and teachers, by the discussions, lectures and sermons that accompany the interaction of individuals and groups, and by Pentecostal radio programmes and publications (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, pp 55-61). Thus when two Pentecostals from different places meet they are likely to find that they speak the same language and that they describe their experiences in the same terms.

Besides linkages with other Pentecostals, members have linkages with people outside the movement - friends, associates and contacts - and these are the links through which recruitment to the movement is constantly occurring.

### Leadership

Turner and Killian distinguish between the charismatic leader and other less conspicuous leaders, using the Weberian concept of charisma which has been dealt with in more detail in the discussion of reasons for participation. They comment that a large range of qualities and capabilities are ascribed to charismatic leaders, but these are more image than reality. Such leaders are also likely to be isolated from normal criticism, and this may result in their developing an exaggerated opinion of their own capabilities, and making decisions on the basis of their own ideas rather than by considering all options.

Turner and Killian go on to differentiate two functions of a leader: to be a symbol of the movement, and to make decisions

for the movement. Firstly, the charismatic leader serves as a very general symbol to the movement, symbolizing its entire character and objectives and the struggle from which it has arisen. This is partially a reflection of his own personal characteristics, partly a creation of the promoters of the movement, and largely a projection by the followers (Turner and Killian, 1972, pp 390-392).

Secondly, the leader must make decisions for the movement. Brinton has suggested four kinds of skills in the area of decision-making: the discovery of basic ideas or theories, the devising of suitable methods of spreading these ideas and influencing men to act on them, the creating and holding of the personal loyalties of followers, and dealing with the men at the top (Turner and Killian, 1972, p 394).

Much of the writing about social movements seems to assume that there will be one single leader of any movement, but Gerlach and Hine's findings about the Pentecostal movement and the Black Power movement contradict this. They use the term "polycephalous" (many-headed) to describe the organizational structure of these movements.

Although some are leaders and others followers, all participants are defined as brothers and sisters by the Pentecostal ideology, since they are all God's children. The leaders can therefore be described as "primus inter pares" or first among equals (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 35). This does not mean that there are no authoritarian leaders, but there are no centralised organizational



patterns. Some individuals are widely recognised as leaders in the movement, and influence its development, but their power is limited by a number of factors: they disagree on matters of theological emphasis, they have incomplete knowledge of all the groups in the movement and have no power to determine whether a particular person is a member of the movement, and they cannot make decisions binding on all movement participants and have no regulatory powers except over members of their own groups (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, pp 36-37).

Each group within the movement will have some sort of leadership, but there is a wide range of structures because of the different types of groups existing, from the classical Pentecostal sect to the group within a mainline church. Among the denominations there are a number of different types, from democratic to episcopal. Gerlach and Hine do identify a common characteristic of the leadership, however, in that it is based on personal charisma rather than on the fulfilment of bureaucratic training requirements and progression up through ranked positions. They see this charisma as a product of total personal commitment, which inspires and persuades followers (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, pp 38-39).

#### Membership

Turner and Killian distinguish between movements with a concern for reform and those which are shaped by the rewards of membership itself, and they consider that within movements members can also be divided into these categories (1957, p 431). There is no reason to suppose that all participants in a

movement have a common orientation to the goals of the movement, and arguments and splits within movements demonstrate that there may be considerable differences among members. There is also differentiation between members on the basis of the length of time they have been in contact with the movement and their responsibilities within the movement. Underlying this, however, the ideology specifies the relationships between participants as being on the level of brother and sister, each individual having a personal relationship with God and receiving spiritual gifts from Him which will benefit the group as a whole.

Gerlach and Hine comment that there is no membership in the Pentecostal movement as a whole, but only membership in local cells, and the rights and duties of membership vary considerably among the different groups. "Participation in the Pentecostal movement is based on whether or not the individual has received, is seeking, or is interested in the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual gifts" (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 37). It is up to the group to evaluate whether an individual meets this requirement, and this is done on the basis of the individual's testimony and the quality of his interaction with the group (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 37).

### Functioning of the Church

The way the church operates can be examined with respect to two different areas, activities designed to attract new members, and the use and impact of spiritual gifts within the church.

### Recruitment

Drawing people into the Kingdom of God and assisting them to a greater level of religious commitment through the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a goal for all Pentecostal groups. Pentecostal groups are seen as a typical example of "conversionist" sects by Bryan Wilson, and he describes these as centreing on evangelism in both teaching and activity. To be admitted to the fellowship an individual must have had a conversion experience and accept Jesus as a personal saviour. No one is precluded from joining, and revivalist techniques are employed in evangelism (Wilson, 1959, pp 5-6). Wilson deals with a tension between the value which such sects place on separation from the world and their emphasis on going out into the world to preach the gospel. "Conversionist" sects experience this tension most fully because their doctrine is less sharply distinguished from that of other denominations. The type of method used is likely to produce emotional responses which do not persist for long (Wilson, 1959, p 11).

Ralph Turner has described different strategies which may be used by social movements for spreading their message. He distinguishes between bargaining, coercion and persuasion, and of these, persuasion is the most applicable to the Pentecostal movement. Persuasion is described as "strictly symbolic

manipulation, without substantial rewards or punishments under the control of the movement" (Turner, 1970, p 149). Words and ideas are used to convey the message of the movement: they have nothing to exchange.

Gerlach and Hine have identified a seven phase commitment process from being an outsider to being a committed group member. The first of these stages was initial contact with a movement participant; they argue that relatives and friends have an important role in making an individual aware of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Following from this, the individual hears testimony and sees changes in other people, and learns to identify his needs with what the movement offers.

Interaction with a group of people is another important step in the process. Gerlach and Hine found the Pentecostal groups they studied to be characterised by a relatively high degree of warmth, welcome for the newcomer, and supportive interaction. The group assists a person to commitment in three ways: by allowing a re-examination of the belief system and presentation of Pentecostal values and beliefs through Bible study, informal discussions, songs and prayer; by developing positive relationships with group members; and by building expectations concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The fourth step discussed by Gerlach and Hine is some form of surrender of the old identity, and transfer of control to something outside the individual's consciousness. In religious terms this can be expressed as total surrender to Christ.

Following this, the fifth stage is the commitment event, which for the Pentecostal is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which Gerlach and Hine describe by using a number of case histories.

They summarise the characteristics of the state as

- a sense of the eternal - a disorientation in time and space as normally perceived - sensations of complete freedom;
- a sense of identity with all other human beings - a sense of cosmic wholeness;
- feelings of gratitude, awe, and great love;
- a sensation of surrender to and immersion in a larger reality, an experience perceived as self-fulfillment and enhancement of individuality rather than loss of it;
- a recognition in the Aristotelian sense - a total comprehension of that which has always been true but unperceived.

(Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 124)

Gerlach and Hine distinguish another component of commitment, a bridge-burning act, which constitutes a point of no return for the individual because of the way in which it is viewed in the wider society. Associated with the baptism experience in Pentecostal theology is glossolalia, or speaking in tongues, and in American society this is improper behaviour which is criticised and ridiculed. In other cultures speaking in tongues may not be unusual behaviour, so other acts may be substituted to perform a bridge-burning function.

For Gerlach and Hine, then, commitment in social, religious and political movements has two components, an identity-altering experience and a bridge-burning act.

The commitment experience may or may not involve a mystical element, but it must produce an altered view of self and some degree of cognitive restructuring. The commitment act may be a real or symbolic destruction of the old way of life, or a real or symbolic achievement of the new, or a combination of both.

(Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 135)

The next stage is "testifying to the experience". People are encouraged to describe their experiences to fellow believers, thus objectifying a subjective experience. This is an important part of the process: without this stage Gerlach and Hine consider that much of the transforming effect of the commitment event would be lost. Finally, following the commitment event, Pentecostals are likely to experience a period of doubt and psychological and physical trials, and have a strong need for group interaction and support. Changed cognitive and behavioural patterns are supported by active participation in the group of believers. Recruitment activities are often associated with enthusiastic newly committed people, so the process continues (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, pp 110-137).

Berger and Luckmann make some similar observations with reference to world views. They write of "plausibility structures" as the specific social base and social processes required for the maintenance of subjective reality, giving the example that "one can maintain one's Catholic faith only if one retains one's significant relationship with the Catholic community" (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, p 172). Conversation is the most important vehicle of reality maintenance, and this requires social contact with others who share the same world view.

Berger and Luckmann go on to discuss "alternation", which is a near-total transformation of subjective reality, a situation in which the individual switches worlds. They see religious conversion as the historical prototype of alternation, and refer to the phrase extra ecclesiam nulla salus, explaining that it is

true in the sense that only within the religious community, the ecclesia, can conversion be effectively maintained as plausible. A conversion experience itself is not enough to keep an individual in the new identity: he needs a community to recognize and confirm his new identity. "The plausibility structure must become the individual's world, displacing all other worlds, especially the world the individual 'inhabited' before his alternation." This requires segregation from the 'inhabitants' of the other worlds, especially the one he has left behind. It is particularly important in the early stages of initiation to be segregated from those who will try and urge him to return to the old identity, disrupting the new reality. The significant others in conversation change, and subjective reality is transformed in conversation with the new significant others. Continuing conversation with them or with the community they represent maintains the subjective reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, pp 177-179).

Another important process is the reinterpretation of the old reality, and the collectivities and significant others that mediated it to the individual, within the legitimating apparatus of the new reality. The past is summed up in a negative manner, such as "When I was still living a life of sin". In Berger and Luckmann's words, "The biographical rupture is thus identified with a cognitive separation of darkness and light" (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, pp 179-180).

In this argument, Berger and Luckmann make many of the same points as Gerlach and Hine, although they are expressed in

different concepts. Both point to the importance of group interaction and conversation in the conversion of an individual to a new world view, and what Gerlach and Hine refer to as "testifying to the experience" can be related to Berger and Luckmann's reinterpretation of the past, since both involved the development of a version of what happened to the individual in the light of the present world view.

### Charismatic Functioning

Material on the functioning of the church can be divided into two different areas: the relationship between ideology and action, and the impact on individuals.

### Ideology

The first distinctive feature of Pentecostal ideology is a very clear understanding of what it means to be a Christian, and a clear framework for distinguishing whether any individual is a Christian or not. This does not rely on the individual's view of himself, but is based on his answers to questions about his experiences of God.

Gerlach and Hine found the relevant question for categorization was "Have you accepted Christ as your Saviour?" (1970, p 174) They comment that all movements include a dichotomous world view and a method of placing any individual in one camp or the other, and that the Pentecostal world view emphasises the Biblical dichotomy between God and Satan, Christ and anti-Christ, heaven and hell. This categorization is extended to almost any situation, so that ideas can be seen as scriptural and unscriptural,



churches are "alive" or "dead" and there is a clear split between the church and the world. This produces an "all or nothing" approach to Pentecostal doctrine: a person is either "for us" or "against us", rather than agreeing with some points and disagreeing with others. Gerlach and Hine point out that this does not necessarily involve antagonism towards non-participants, and there may be real understanding and deep compassion for people outside the movement, but the Pentecostal knows that he stands on the other side of an "ideological glass wall" from the non-participant. It can be described as a glass wall because the outsider cannot grasp the difference between his religious position and the Pentecostals', seeing them as part of a continuum, while the Pentecostal recognizes a barrier between them (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 175).

In classical Pentecostal theology, there are two stages in the Christian experience, firstly conversion, or being "born again", and secondly, the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Neil, 1974, p 10). This produces a two-level view of Christians, so that those who have not been baptised in the Holy Spirit have an incomplete gospel (as opposed to a full gospel), and are lacking in power. One area where mainline churches are seen to be missing out by Pentecostals is in the operation of spiritual gifts. A common model of such churches is the one man show, where the leadership comes from one person and the rest of the people sit and listen. The Pentecostal ideology, however, emphasises the "priesthood of all believers", which is considered by Wilson (1959, p 4) to be a typical characteristic of sects. This means that all members are considered to be endowed with spiritual gifts and so all have

a contribution to make to the life of the church, some especially in the context of the worship service; for example, those who teach, prophesy, and make music. Related to this is the concept of personal power which is discussed by Gerlach and Hine. They state that the sense of personal power that characterizes movement ideologies comes from an experience through which an individual comes into a relationship with a source of power considered to be external to himself (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 164). The very nature of social movements inspires the believer to assume that destiny is on his side, and that he has his own unique role to play as that destiny unfolds (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 164). This means that the individual is a participant rather than a spectator, and his future is tied up with the future of the movement.

This leads on to another function of ideology: it provides a conceptual filter which reinterprets failure. Because a committed Pentecostal believes that the Holy Spirit guides his decisions and leads him into those situations where he can best serve the purposes of God, he can see anything that happens to him in terms of God's purpose being worked out. Doubt or opposition is evidence to the individual that he is on the right track and is therefore being strenuously opposed by the forces of darkness. Gerlach and Hine argue that this characteristic of movements allows them to persist despite setbacks, when outsiders would expect them to die out. Thus an apparent failure such as a poorly attended meeting does not mean that the group's beliefs are not valid, but perhaps that God is moving the group in another direction, towards some other kind of activity (Gerlach and Hine,

1970, p 168).

Another characteristic of movement ideology is that it tends to be expressed as a "party line": there is a common vocabulary and a number of stock phrases which are used by participants to explain their beliefs. An example is "God has no grandsons", which means that one cannot be a Christian by coming from a Christian family, but that one has to have a personal relationship with God. Gerlach and Hine consider that there are two functions of this party line: firstly, it provides ready answers for questions and objections from those outside the movement, and secondly, it facilitates the transmission of the ideology to new converts. Although the Pentecostal "jargon" may seem meaningless for the outsider, to the participant it has a deep significance and serves as a simplified way of communicating a deep and ineffable experience (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, pp 161-163).

This "party line" expression of ideology demonstrates the unity that exists between various Pentecostal groups. Slogans like "Jesus is the answer" are the basis for ideological unity between groups which at a lower level also have a large degree of diversity in emphasis, interpretations, adaptations and exegesis. There is a common language which is spread round the groups by contacts between them, and the doctrinal statements of the major denominations are all basically similar, but on minor points of belief and behaviour there are many different attitudes. This is related to the intensity with which participants approach their beliefs, according to Gerlach and Hine (1970, p 166). Because individuals spend a considerable amount of time in Bible

study and in working out with others the application of Biblical principles to specific problems and situations, there is opportunity for differing viewpoints to develop on issues. Debate over local concerns tends to strengthen the commitment of those involved while developing diversity within the movement.

### Impact on Individuals

The impact of participation in the movement for individuals can be seen from two perspectives, that of the individuals themselves and that of outsiders. Reidy and Richardson (1978, p 227) noted that members of Catholic neo-Pentecostal groups have a positive view of their experience, stating that they have increased love for other people, and that they are "in God's will" which they value highly. From an external viewpoint, Reidy and Richardson remarked that there is a significant impact on participants' social interaction, so that a large proportion of their leisure time is devoted to meetings and casual interaction with other participants and seeking others to join the group, and most participants also become more supportive of their church (1978, p 227). It has also been suggested that participants find meaning in their activities, and that feelings of relative deprivation are in some way compensated for (Reidy and Richardson, 1978, p 227).

Gerlach and Hine found a change in the individual's understanding of self to be a characteristic of conversion experiences. Following their experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Pentecostals see their relationships with God, with fellow believers and with non-Christians in a different light: they become closer to God, rely on fellow Christians more for mutual

support, and feel more urgently the need to "bring non-members to the Lord and into the Body if possible" (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 130).

### Summary

This chapter is an attempt to draw together some ideas that seem relevant to the situation being studied, in the hope that new insights into the fieldwork findings may be gained through putting them together. The historical development of Pentecostalism was described, with some attention to developments overseas and in New Zealand, especially the recent growth of the Charismatic Renewal.

Motivations for participation were examined under four headings: deprivation, search for identity, primary group ties, and charismatic leadership.

Gerlach and Hine's description of the movement as decentralised, segmented and reticulate was the focus of the section on structure, and further comments were made about leadership and membership of the movement.

Finally, material relating to the functioning of the church was divided into three sections: recruitment, the relationship between ideology and action, and the impact on individuals.

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN

### Introduction

Several research strategies were used to collect the information for this project. It was intended that each should give different insights so that a comprehensive understanding of the group might be reached. As these strategies were pursued concurrently, it was often possible to investigate an idea further using another method. For example, a conversation with one person might lead to increased awareness of a particular behaviour in observation of church services, which might further suggest a link between two variables which could be examined through cross-tabulation of questionnaire results.

### Beginnings

Pastor Meehan, the leader of the Christchurch Apostolic Church was approached in order that the church's consent to the project might be obtained. The church leaders supported the project because they were interested in gaining more information about the church and its members, and this facilitated access to information. A questionnaire for church members had already been proposed by church leaders, and this was incorporated into the project. Pastor Meehan also agreed to be interviewed on several occasions, and gave background information on the church and the way it was run, and his view of current developments within the church was obtained.

At the same time, participant observation of church services began, and a house group was chosen for an intensive study.

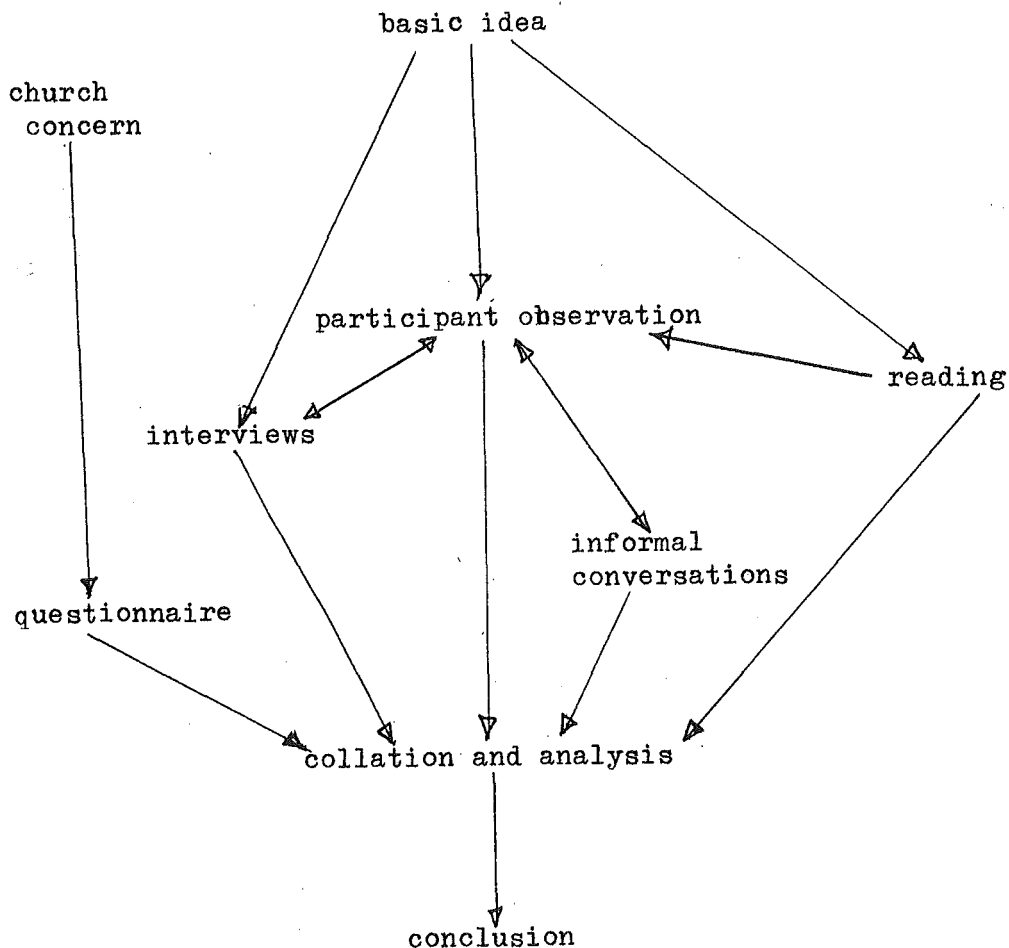


Figure 1: Research Design

During this time, reading was done in an attempt to find material that was relevant to the project and would cast new light upon it. Figure 1 is an attempt to summarise how the study was put together, and the arrows represent flows of ideas.

#### Questionnaire

A draft questionnaire had already been prepared by a member of the church, to gather some background information about church members and their involvement in the church. Some additional questions were added to this, to obtain some fuller information for the project, and some of the original questions were altered



in form. It was decided that the best way of getting a large number of respondents would be to have the congregation fill the questionnaire in during a church service, and to collect it at the end. This made it necessary to have as short a questionnaire as possible, so that it would not interrupt the service too much. The questionnaire was printed by the church, and on 13 August, 1978 was administered to the congregations at both services. A copy of the questionnaire appears in the Appendix. On both occasions Pastor Meehan spoke about the questionnaire, indicating that it would be helpful to the church to get this information, and I also made a brief statement about what I was doing. The man who had made the first draft of the questionnaire also spoke. The people were given time to fill it out, and the forms were collected after the service. These were numbered, and then coded so that they could be analysed by computer. The SPSS package was used for statistical analysis and cross-tabulation of the results. These results are found in Chapter Four.

#### Participant Observation: Church Services

Both morning and evening services were observed over a period of several months in order to get some idea of what church members experienced. A typification of services at Christchurch Apostolic Church was built up. In these services I behaved as a member of the congregation, participating in singing and listening to what was being said. I looked around a lot, observing people's reactions to what was happening, but did nothing to draw attention to myself. There was time to talk to people about the church, and this added further to the impressions of church life. I had established that I was a Christian, so people did not try to

convert me, but often seemed to accept me as a participant and forget that I was an observer. I knew a number of members of the church, and this number increased as I participated in a house group. Thus, I was in a position where a number of people knew me and knew what I was doing, while to others I appeared to be an ordinary member of the congregation. Although I had been introduced to the church in conjunction with the questionnaire, many people forgot this, and because they had seen me at the church a few times, thought I was a member. This was related to the size of the church and its rate of growth: there were too many people for everyone to know everyone else, and new people were continually joining.

The setting was a convenient one for both participation and observation. Participation entailed sitting and standing and singing when everyone else did, and observation of other people was possible by sitting on the middle of the arranged seating so that people all around could be seen. Since their attention was focussed on the leader they did not notice if anyone was looking at them.

After attending each service, I typed up notes on what had happened, so that I had records with details of what had taken place and who had done what, with comments on events I considered significant.

In conversation, church members often asked me what I had found out, and said that they hoped to read the study when it was finished. Their remarks often seemed to indicate that they were

not sure what a sociologist might see in the church, and that they did not question why things were done in certain ways, but took it for granted that this was how the church was.

#### Participant Observation: House Group

In observing house groups, there were two possible courses of action, either to visit a number of different groups, or to attend one group over a period of time. The latter strategy was chosen because it enabled development of rapport with the group and an understanding of how the group worked, and the group members' relationships with the church.

The house group for observation was chosen for several reasons: I had a friend in the group who found the group valuable, and he told me that the leader would not mind if I attended. I phoned the leader to ask if I could come, and he assented. I found that I knew several members of the group, and as I was of a similar age to most members of the group I did not feel out of place. When I discovered from the questionnaire results that many members of the church were under 30 this seemed to be another good reason for observing this group and getting to know what they thought about the church.

In the house group situation, because of that nature of the activity, all members of the group were aware that I was studying the church. However, because I participated as well as observing, I tended to be viewed as a member of the group, and was asked by several people if I intended to continue coming when I had finished my thesis. I developed rapport with a number of the

group members and talked to them about the house group and the church. I also interviewed the leaders of this group and one other group on tape.

I attended a couple of meetings where the house group I was studying combined with another group, and I also attended a weekend camp of several house groups together. This was held at the end of October at Woodend Youth Lodge, and was a fairly relaxed time, with few formal activities except for a panel discussion on Saturday morning and a service on Sunday morning. This enabled me to talk to a number of people informally at other times and to get more ideas about the church and its members.

#### Informal Conversations

I had a large number of impromptu discussions with people about the church, some with members and others with outsiders. Some of these occurred when I was asked about my study, and people commented on it, and others when I asked people for information about something. I was fortunate to know plenty of people who knew the Apostolic Church and could give me their views of it, and since many were interested in the research findings, they were co-operative about giving information.

#### Summary

By using a number of different strategies to gather information, it was hoped that a well-rounded view of the church would be obtained, and some understanding of its current functioning would be gained as well as background material on both the church and its members. It was hoped that insights gained through one

means would help to explain questions raised by other approaches. The central strategy was participant observation, since without taking part in church activities I would have found it most difficult to talk knowledgeably to church members or to interpret questionnaire data. As Gerlach and Hine (1970, p xx) comment, participant observation allows one to see the whole and avoid distortions of pre-occupation with the parts, producing more reliable, though less quantifiable, data. Figure 1 shows the centrality of participant observation within the research design.

## CHAPTER FOUR: QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

The questionnaire was distributed to those present at the morning and evening services of 13 August 1978. 313 completed questionnaires were returned in all, 227 in the morning and a further 84 in the evening. The questionnaire included questions about attendance at church activities, respondents' church backgrounds and their perception of the church, as well as background information on age, sex, and other variables. Tables of results are found at the end of the chapter.

### Background Information

Respondents were asked for information on their personal background in an attempt to discover any pattern of age, occupation, or family status that might be present.

### Age and Sex

Those who attend services at the Christchurch Apostolic Church are primarily young people. As Table 1 reveals, two-thirds of the respondents are under 30 years of age, and only 18.2 per cent are over 40 years of age.

There are more female than male members, although the difference is not substantial. Table 2 shows that there are nearly 12 per cent more female than male respondents.

There is a strong relationship between the age and sex of respondents. Females predominate in the youngest age category and in the two oldest age categories (see Table 3).

### Marital Status

The church has a large proportion of unmarried members. As Table 4 shows, nearly half (47 per cent) of the respondents have never been married. There is little variation in marital status according to sex. Similar proportions of males and females fall into the "married" and "never married" categories, but more female respondents are divorced or separated or widowed.

The church members do not have unusually large families. In fact, only 3 of the married respondents have more than four children living at home, as Table 5 reveals. Furthermore, approximately one-third of the respondents who are married or were once married have no children living at home.

Age and marital status are strongly associated. Table 6 shows that the proportion of respondents who have never been married decreases with age.

### Occupational Status

There are a large number of students among respondents, and a relatively small number with managerial and professional occupations. Table 7 shows that 20 per cent of respondents are students. Apart from this, homemaker and school teacher are the most common occupations.

### Educational Qualifications

Younger members of the church have higher educational qualifications than older members. University Entrance is the most common qualification for those under 30, while for older

members trade or technical qualifications are the most common (see Table 8). Many church members are still in the process of gaining further educational qualifications, as 65 respondents gave "student" as their occupation.

There is a slight relationship between sex of respondents and their educational qualifications. Males are more likely to have degrees or trade or technical qualifications than females, but overall, both sexes have a similar range of qualifications, as Table 9 shows. For both sexes, University Entrance is most common, 25.4% of males and 23.4% of females having this qualification.

#### Income

Church members are not particularly affluent. Only eight respondent had gross annual incomes in excess of \$10,000, as Table 10 reveals.

There is also an association between sex and income, females predominating in the lowest income category, while there are more males than females in the higher income categories (see Table 11).

There is a clear relationship between income and age of the respondents which is shown in Table 12. 63 per cent of respondents under 20 fell into the lowest income category, as compared with only 28 per cent of 40-59 year olds.

#### Country of Birth

A very high proportion of church members are New Zealanders by



birth. Table 13 reveals that over 85 per cent of respondents were born in New Zealand.

#### Degree of Involvement and Participation in Church Activities

The questionnaire included a number of questions about respondents' attendance at particular church activities, and their perceived level of involvement in the church overall.

#### Attendance at Church Services

A high rate of church attendance is found among church members. Half the respondents attend twice a week, and over 80 per cent attend at least once a week, as Table 14 demonstrates.

Morning services are attended regularly by a large proportion of the respondents. As Table 15 shows, over 70 per cent of respondents stated that they attend morning services regularly. Attendance at evening services is rather lower, with only 54 per cent of respondents stating that they attend regularly (see Table 16).

The evening service has more occasional attenders than does the morning service. Tables 15 and 16 show that 19.5 per cent attend evening services occasionally whereas only 8.3 per cent attend morning services occasionally.

#### Attendance at House Groups

Many of the church members participate in the house group activities of the church. Nearly half of the respondents, as Table 17 shows, regularly attend house group meetings, which are held once a week.

#### Perceived Level of Involvement

Church members have varying degrees of involvement in the church. As Table 18 reveals, nearly half perceive themselves as fully committed members. On the other hand, over one-tenth of the respondents identified themselves as visitors.

There is a strong association between level of involvement and frequency of attendance. Committed members attend most frequently: over 70 per cent attend twice a week, as Table 19 shows, while 45 per cent of visitors attend less than once a month.

Respondents' perceived level of involvement in the church is a good predictor of their involvement in a house group. Approximately three-quarters of committed members attend regularly, compared with only 40 per cent of regular attenders, as Table 20 shows.

Level of involvement in the church varies with age. The youngest age group, under 20, has higher proportions of visitors and

regular attenders than other age categories, and fewer committed members. Nearly one-fifth of those under 20 are visitors, and only one-quarter are committed members, compared with around half of most of the other age categories (see Table 21).

Personal contact and face-to-face interaction play an important part in influencing people to come to the Christchurch Apostolic Church for the first time. When they were asked why they came on the first occasion, nearly half the respondents replied that they had come with a friend, and another one-fifth had been recommended to come, as Table 22 shows.

The church members were also asked why they maintain a connection with the church. A sense that this was their spiritual home or that God had guided them there was the reason for continuing to come to Apostolic services for nearly a third of respondents, as Table 23 shows. Enjoyment of the church activities and the friendly atmosphere were the other two main reasons given for sustained attendance of church activities.

Reasons given by respondents for continuing to come to the church vary with their level of involvement in the church. For committed members, the most common reason is a spiritual one: a feeling that this was the right church for them and that God had guided them to it. 54.9 per cent of committed members responded in this way, as Table 24 shows. No other reason was given so frequently by any group, and the next most common reasons, enjoyment of the church activities and appreciation of the warm friendly atmosphere, were given by respondents in all levels of involvement.

Teaching, music and fellowship were the three aspects of the church that were most popular among respondents. House group was another popular choice, since 95 people chose it out of 150 who regularly attend a house group. Table 25 shows that over 50 per cent of respondents chose each of teaching, music and fellowship, while other options were chosen by less than a quarter of respondents.

Preferences varied considerably with respondents' levels of involvement in the church. Overall, committed members were most enthusiastic about the church, and had the highest percentages in almost all categories, while visitors had fewer preferences (see Table 26). An interesting exception is music, which is the only option chosen by over half the visitors. 63.2 per cent of regular attenders liked the music, but only 51.0 per cent of committed members. For visitors, friends of the fellowship and regular attenders, music is the most favoured part of the church, but for committed members, teaching and fellowship have more appeal.

#### Other Church Activities

The church's Youth Group, Young Marrieds' Group, and Women's Group all have relatively low attendance rates. About 5 per cent of respondents attend each of these activities regularly, as Table 27 demonstrates.

### Church Background

Respondents were asked a number of questions pertaining to their history of church involvement, in an attempt to discover whether any patterns would emerge.

### Other Church Connections

The majority of respondents were connected with another church before they came to the Christchurch Apostolic Church. Only 16.6 per cent said they had had no previous church connections (see Table 28). Church members came from a variety of traditional church backgrounds, as well as other Pentecostal churches. Although the majority (72.5 per cent) stated they no longer maintain connections with other churches, there are nearly one-fifth of the respondents who do have some connection with another church in Christchurch, as Table 29 shows. The proportion of those who continue to have a connection with another church varies by denomination. Nearly 40 per cent of respondents with Methodist backgrounds still attend other churches as well as the Apostolic Church, whereas only 14.5 per cent of Pentecostals do so (see Table 30).

### The Move to Apostolic

The number of respondents to come to Apostolic has increased every year up to the present, as Table 31 shows. This may be explained in part by the fact that some people who came earlier have now left, but the church has grown rapidly during the 1970's. Some of the respondents are also visitors, and the majority of visitors first came in 1978, as Table 32 shows.

In every time category, respondents came to the Christchurch Apostolic Church from a range of other church backgrounds, as Table 33 demonstrates. There is some fluctuation between the years, but no clear pattern can be distinguished with the amount of information given.

Table 34 shows that there is no clear pattern relating previous church affiliation to degree of involvement, although respondents from Anglican and Pentecostal backgrounds are far more likely to be Friends of the Fellowship than any other groups.

#### Personal Religious Backgrounds

Most respondents have become Christians within the last decade. 50 per cent became Christians in the period 1970-78, as Table 35 shows.

As well as the original commitment to Christ, church members are expected to be baptised in water, baptised in the Holy Spirit, as to take the Right Hand of Fellowship as further signs of commitment. These will be referred to collectively as church "landmarks".

The dates on which respondents passed these "landmarks" are also quite recent, as Table 36 shows.

Committed members are most likely to have been baptised in the Holy Spirit and to have taken the Right Hand of Fellowship, while respondents in other categories are more likely not to have taken the Right Hand of Fellowship. Table 37 shows that over

one-third of visitors, friends of the fellowship, and regular attenders did not give a date when they had been baptised in the Holy Spirit, which probably means that they had not had this experience, and Table 38 shows that for these categories around 90 per cent of respondents did not respond that they had taken the Right Hand of Fellowship. Only 11.8 per cent of committed members did not respond to the question about baptism in the Holy Spirit, and 15 per cent for the Right Hand of Fellowship. This means that whether a person has taken the Right Hand of Fellowship is a good indicator of their level of involvement in the church.

### Suggestions for Improvements

Respondents were also asked an open-ended question "Are there any improvements you would like to see made?" Less than half the respondents made comments, but there was a wide range of responses. Many related specifically to the church services, and many different suggestions were made, from "longer services" to "shorter services", and from "more messages and interpretations in tongues" to "more day by day Christian teaching and a bit less of gifts".

Another area of concern was for increased pastoral care and practical help for church members. Some concern was shown for people to get to know each other and to encourage one another, and particularly for activities for the 18-25 age group.

Many comments reflected the individual's situation: some wanted more family services, others wanted to be visited by the Pastor, while others wanted outings for young people.

Overall, there were many different comments, and while some ideas were mentioned several times, there is no simple way in which they can be summed up.



### Summary

On the basis of the preceding material, it is possible to produce a general description of the congregation of the Christchurch Apostolic Church.

The church has a large proportion of young members, and there are slightly more female than male members, with females predominating in the youngest and oldest age categories. A large proportion of members have never been married, and of those who are or have been married, few have many children living at home. The most common occupations are student, housewife, and teacher. Most members have some higher educational qualification, University Entrance being the most common. Affluence is not a characteristic of members, the majority receiving an annual gross income of less than \$7500. A very high proportion of respondents are New Zealanders by birth.

There is a high rate of attendance at church services, with half the members attending both morning and evening services regularly. The morning service has more regular attenders than the evening service, while the evening service has more occasional attenders than the morning service. Many of the church members participate in the church's weekly house group meetings.

Members see themselves as having varying levels of involvement in the church, the largest proportion identifying themselves as committed members. Younger people are less likely to be committed members than older people.

Personal contact and face-to-face interaction was important in influencing people to attend the Apostolic Church for the first time. Many members explained their continuing membership of the church by reference to God's guidance or to an understanding that this was their spiritual home. This reason was most commonly given by committed members, while other groups replied that enjoyment of the services and the church's friendly atmosphere was the reason for their sustained attendance.

The three most popular aspects of the church were the teaching, the music, and the fellowship. Preferences varied with respondents' level of involvement in the church: overall, committed members were the most enthusiastic about the church.

Most respondents were connected with another church before they came to Christchurch Apostolic, and they came from a wide range of denominations, Pentecostal as well as mainline. Nearly one-fifth keep some connection with another church in Christchurch.

The church has grown rapidly during the 1970's and the number of newcomers per year has continued to increase up to the present. Most respondents became Christians in the last decade, and other church "landmarks" have also been passed comparatively recently. Committed members are more likely to have passed these "landmarks" than other respondents.

A wide range of improvements was suggested by respondents.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY  
AGE CATEGORIES

Age Category	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
Under 20	19.8	62
20-29	45.4	142
30-39	15.3	48
40-49	7.3	23
50-59	6.4	20
60 and over	4.5	14
No response	1.3	4
TOTAL	100.0	313

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY  
SEX

Sex	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
Male	42.8	134
Female	54.6	171
No Response	2.6	8
TOTAL	100.0	313

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY SEX AND AGE CATEGORIES

Sex	Age Categories												NR	N
	Under 20		20-29		30-39		40-49		50-59		60 and over			
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Male	38.7	24	50.0	71	50.0	24	47.8	11	15.0	3	7.1	1	0.0	0
Female	61.3	38	49.3	70	47.9	23	47.8	11	80.0	16	78.6	11	50.0	2
No Response	0.0	0	0.7	1	2.1	1	4.3	1	5.0	1	14.3	2	50.0	2
TOTAL	100.0	62	100.0	142	100.0	48	100.0	23	100.0	20	100.0	14	100.0	4

TABLE 4

MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS BY SEX

Marital Status	Sex							
	Male		Female		No Response		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Married	41.0	55	39.2	67	50.4	4	40.3	126
Widowed	0.0	0	2.3	4	12.5	1	1.6	5
Divorced/Separated	3.0	4	10.5	18	0.0	0	7.0	22
Never Married	48.5	65	46.8	80	25.0	2	47.0	147
No Response	7.5	10	1.2	2	12.5	1	4.2	13
TOTAL	100.0	134	100.0	171	100.0	8	100.0	313

TABLE 5

NUMBER OF CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME BY MARITAL STATUS

No. of Children Living at Home	Marital Status									
	Married		Widowed		Div/Sep		NR		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
None	33.1	41	80.0	4	40.9	9	15.4	2	34.1	56
1 - 2	38.7	48	20.0	1	45.5	10	23.1	3	37.8	62
3 - 4	21.0	26	0.0	0	9.1	2	15.4	2	18.3	30
More than 4	2.4	3	0.0	0	0.0	0	7.7	1	2.4	4
NR	4.8	6	0.0	0	4.5	1	38.5	5	7.3	12
TOTAL	100.0	124	100.0	5	100.0	22	100.0	13	100.0	164

TABLE 6

MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE CATEGORIES

	Age Categories												NR		Total	
	Under 20		20-29		30-39		40-49		50-59		60+		%	N	%	N
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Married	1.6	1	35.9	51	66.7	32	65.2	15	90.0	18	50.0	7	50.0	2	40.3	126
Widowed	0.0	0	0.0	0	2.7	1	4.3	1	5.0	1	14.3	2	0.0	0	1.6	5
Div/Sep'td	0.0	0	5.6	8	16.7	8	13.0	3	5.0	1	14.3	2	0.0	0	7.0	22
Never Married	82.3	51	57.0	81	14.6	7	17.4	4	0.0	0	21.4	3	25.0	1	47.0	147
No Response	16.1	10	1.4	2	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	25.0	1	4.2	13
TOTAL	100.0	62	100.0	142	100.0	48	100.0	23	100.0	20	100.0	14	100.0	4	100.0	313

TABLE 7

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY OCCUPATIONAL  
CATEGORIES

Occupational Categories	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
Housewife/Homemaker	14.4	45
Student (incl. University, school)	20.8	65
Teacher (incl. student teacher)	11.8	37
Managerial/Professional	4.5	14
Skilled	14.7	46
Unskilled	11.2	35
Clerical	12.1	38
Other (incl. Christian work)	7.7	24
No response	2.9	9
TOTAL	100.0	313



TABLE 8

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND AGE CATEGORIES

Educational Qualifications	Age Categories										Total	
	Under 20		20-39		40-59		60+		NR			
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
School Certificate	14.5	9	13.7	26	4.6	2	14.3	2	25.0	1	12.8	40
University Entrance	35.5	22	25.8	49	2.3	1	7.1	1	25.0	1	23.6	74
Degree	1.6	1	20.5	39	2.3	1	0.0	0	0.0	0	13.1	41
Trade or Technical	4.8	3	13.7	26	25.8	11	0.0	0	25.0	1	13.1	41
Teachers Certificate	0.0	0	4.7	9	14.0	6	7.1	1	0.0	0	5.1	16
Other	0.0	0	5.3	10	4.6	2	7.1	1	0.0	0	4.2	13
No Response	43.5	27	11.1	21	46.5	20	64.3	9	25.0	1	28.1	88
TOTAL	100.0	62	100.0	190	100.0	43	100.0	14	100.0	4	100.0	313

TABLE 9

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND SEX

Educational Qualifications	Sex							
	Male		Female		NR		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
School Cert.	10.4	14	14.6	25	12.5	1	12.8	40
U.E.	25.4	34	23.4	40	0.0	0	23.6	74
Degree	17.2	23	10.5	18	0.0	0	13.1	41
Trade/Technical	17.9	24	8.8	15	25.0	2	13.1	41
Teachers Cert.	2.2	3	7.6	13	0.0	0	5.1	16
Other	3.7	5	4.7	8	0.0	0	4.2	13
NR	23.1	31	30.4	52	62.5	5	28.1	88
TOTAL	100.0	134	100.0	171	100.0	8	100.0	313

TABLE 10

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY GROSS  
INCOME

Income Category	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
\$0-2500	28.8	90
2500-5000	20.1	63
5000-7500	21.7	68
7500-10000	7.3	23
10000-125000	1.6	5
> 12500	1.0	3
No response	19.5	61
TOTAL	100.0	313

TABLE 11

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY INCOME AND SEX

Income Category	Sex				NR		Total	
	Male %	N	Female %	N	%	N	%	N
0 - 5000	42.5	57	54.4	93	37.5	3	48.9	153
5000 - 10000	36.6	49	23.4	40	25.0	2	29.1	91
>10000	5.2	7	0.6	1	0.0	0	2.6	8
NR	15.7	21	21.6	37	37.5	3	19.5	61
TOTAL	100.0	134	100.0	171	100.0	8	100.0	313

TABLE 12

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY INCOME AND AGE CATEGORIES

Income Categories	Age Categories										Total	
	20		20-39		40-59		60		NR			
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
0 - 5000	63.0	39	47.1	90	27.9	12	64.3	9	75.0	3	48.8	153
5000 - 10000	8.0	5	37.9	72	30.2	13	0.0	0	25.0	1	29.0	91
>10000	0.0	0	2.7	5	6.9	3	0.0	0	0.0	0	<del>29.0</del>	8
NR	29.0	18	12.2	23	34.8	15	35.7	5	0.0	0	10.4	61
TOTAL	100.0	62	100.0	190	100.0	43	100.0	14	100.0	4	100.0	313

TABLE 13

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH

Country	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
New Zealand	85.3	267
United Kingdom	7.7	24
Europe	1.6	5
Other	4.2	13
No Response	1.3	4
TOTAL	100.0	313

TABLE 14

FREQUENCY OF ATTENDANCE AT CHURCH SERVICES

Frequency of attendance	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
Twice a week	50.2	157
Once a week	31.3	98
Once a fortnight	4.5	14
Once a month	1.9	6
Less than once a month	8.0	25
No response	4.2	13
TOTAL	100.0	313

TABLE 15

FREQUENCY OF ATTENDANCE AT MORNING SERVICES

Frequency of Attendance	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
Regularly	71.6	224
Occasionally	8.3	26
Seldom	2.6	8
Never	1.0	3
Yes, unspecified	0.6	2
No response	16.0	50
TOTAL	100.0	313

TABLE 16

FREQUENCY OF ATTENDANCE AT EVENING SERVICES

	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
Regularly	54.3	170
Occasionally	19.5	61
Seldom	5.4	17
Never	0.3	1
No response	20.5	64
TOTAL	100.0	313

TABLE 17

FREQUENCY OF ATTENDANCE AT HOUSE GROUPS

Frequency of Attendance	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
Regularly	47.9	150
Occasionally	5.4	17
Seldom	1.9	6
Never	4.2	13
No response	40.6	127
TOTAL	100.0	313

TABLE 18

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE CHURCH

Level of Involvement	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
Visitor	12.8	40
Friend of the Fellowship	10.2	32
Regular Attender	27.8	87
Committed member	48.9	153
No response	0.3	1
TOTAL	100.0	313



TABLE 19

FREQUENCY OF ATTENDANCE BY LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE CHURCH

Frequency of Attendance	Level of Involvement											
	Visitor		Friend of Fellowship		Regular Attender		Committed Member		NR		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Twice a week	5.0	2	21.9	7	37.9	33	75.2	115	0.0	0	50.2	157
Once a week	7.5	3	21.9	7	57.5	50	24.2	37	100.0	1	31.3	98
Once a fortnight	5.0	2	25.0	8	3.4	3	0.7	1	0.0	0	4.5	14
Once a month	7.5	3	9.4	3	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	1.9	6
Les than once a month	45.0	18	18.8	6	1.1	1	0.0	0	0.0	0	8.0	25
No response	30.0	12	3.1	1	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	4.2	13
TOTAL	100.0	40	100.0	32	100.0	87	100.0	153	100.0	1	100.0	313

TABLE 20

## FREQUENCY OF ATTENDANCE AT HOUSE GROUP BY LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

Frequency of Attendance	Level of Involvement											
	Visitor		Friend of Fellowship		Regular Attender		Committed member		NR		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Regularly	0.0	0	3.1	1	40.2	35	74.5	114	0.0	0	47.9	150
Occasionally	0.0	0	3.1	1	10.3	9	4.6	7	0.0	0	5.4	17
Seldom	2.5	1	3.1	1	1.1	1	2.0	3	0.0	0	1.9	6
Never	2.5	1	9.4	3	5.7	5	2.6	4	0.0	0	4.2	13
Yes, un-specified	0.0	0	0.0	0	1.1	1	2.0	3	0.0	0	1.3	4
No response	95.0	38	81.3	26	41.4	36	14.4	22	100.0	1	39.3	123
TOTAL	100.0	40	100.0	32	100.0	87	100.0	153	100.0	1	100.0	313

TABLE 21

LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT BY AGE CATEGORIES

Level of Involvement	Age Categories														Total	
	Under 20		20-29		30-39		40-49		50-59		60+		NR			
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Visitor	19.4	12	12.7	18	12.5	6	13.0	3	0.0	0	7.1	1	0.0	0	12.8	40
Friend of the Fellowship	6.5	4	9.9	14	8.3	4	26.1	6	15.0	3	7.1	1	0.0	0	10.2	32
Regular Attender	48.4	30	24.6	35	25.0	12	8.7	2	20.0	4	14.3	2	50.0	2	27.8	87
Committed Member	25.8	16	52.8	75	54.2	26	47.8	11	65.0	13	71.4	10	50.0	2	48.9	153
No Response	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	4.3	1	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.3	1
TOTAL	100.0	62	100.0	142	100.0	48	100.0	23	100.0	20	100.0	14	100.0	4	100.0	313

TABLE 22

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY REASON FOR FIRST  
ATTENDANCE

Reason for First Attendance	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
Read newspaper advert.	3.2	10
came with friend	45.0	141
Was recommended to come	20.1	63
Heard pastor speak elsewhere so came to see his church	4.2	13
Other	26.2	82
No response	1.3	4
TOTAL	100.0	313

TABLE 23

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY REASONS FOR CONTINUING  
TO COME

Reason for Continuing to Come	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
God's guidance/ spiritual home	32.6	102
Like it	13.4	42
Fellowship/atmosphere	13.7	43
Come with family/ friends	3.5	11
Teaching/growth	8.9	28
Needs met	1.9	6
Other	15.7	49
No response	10.2	32
Total	100.0	313

TABLE 24

REASONS FOR CONTINUING TO COME BY LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

Reasons for Continuing To Come	Level of Involvement										Total	
	Visitor		Friend of Fellowship		Regular Attender		Committed Member		NR			
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
God's guidance/spiritual home	0.0	0	6.3	2	18.4	16	54.9	84	0.0	0	32.6	102
Like it	15.0	6	6.3	2	18.4	16	11.1	17	100.0	1	13.4	42
Fellowship/Atmosphere	17.5	7	28.1	9	18.4	16	7.2	11	0.0	0	13.7	45
Come with family/Friends	2.5	1	0.0	0	5.7	5	3.3	5	0.0	0	3.5	11
Teaching/growth	2.5	1	12.5	4	16.1	14	5.9	9	0.0	0	8.9	28
Needs met	0.0	0	0.0	0	1.1	1	3.3	5	0.0	0	1.9	6
Other	15.0	6	40.6	13	16.1	14	10.5	16	0.0	0	15.7	49
No Response	47.5	19	6.3	2	5.7	5	3.9	6	0.0	0	10.2	32
TOTAL	100.0	40	100.0	32	100.0	87	100.0	153	100.0	1	100.0	313

TABLE 25

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "WHAT DO YOU LIKE  
MOST ABOUT THIS ASSEMBLY?"

Response Categories	Proportion of Respondents who chose each Alternative*	
	%	N
Teaching in services	59.4	186
Music in services	55.3	173
Fellowship	53.4	167
House group	30.4	95
Organisation - the way the Church is run	23.0	72
Opportunities for Christian service	20.4	64
Opportunities for the congregation to contribute in services	23.3	73
Individual care for people	24.0	75
It is Pentecostal	23.6	74
Other	11.5	36

\* Most respondents chose more than one alternative

TABLE 26

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT  
THIS ASSEMBLY?" BY LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE CHURCH

Response Category	Level of Involvement							
	Visitor		Friend		Reg.Att.		Com.m'ber	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Teaching	35.0	14	53.1	17	58.6	51	67.3	103
Music	55.0	22	53.1	17	63.2	55	51.0	78
Fellowship	37.5	15	40.6	13	51.7	45	61.4	94
House Group	5.0	2	6.3	2	23.0	20	46.4	71
Organisation	7.5	3	6.3	2	21.8	19	31.4	48
Opp/Service	5.0	2	12.5	4	8.0	7	33.3	51
Contribute	7.5	3	25.0	8	17.2	15	30.1	46
Indiv. Care	7.5	3	18.8	6	18.4	16	32.0	49
Pentecostal	17.5	7	12.5	4	16.1	14	31.4	49

\*Most respondents chose more than one alternative

TABLE 27

FREQUENCY OF ATTENDANCE AT YOUTH GROUP,  
YOUNG MARRIEDS GROUP AND WOMENS GROUP

Frequency of Attendance	Activity					
	Youth Group		Young Marrieds Group		Womens Group	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Regularly	5.4	17	4.5	14	5.1	16
Occasionally	1.0	3	1.9	6	3.8	12
Seldom	1.3	4	1.3	4	1.0	3
Never	12.8	40	10.9	34	11.2	35
No Response	79.5	249	81.5	255	78.9	247
TOTAL	100.0	313	100.0	313	100.0	313

TABLE 28

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY PREVIOUS CHURCH CONNECTION

Previous Church Connection	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
None	16.6	52
Anglican	15.3	48
Methodist	5.8	18
Presbyterian	9.6	30
Baptist	8.9	28
Pentecostal (incl. other Apostolic churches)	22.0	69
Other	21.1	66
No response	0.6	2
TOTAL	100.0	313



TABLE 29

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY CONTINUING CONNECTION WITH OTHER CHURCHES

Continuing Connection	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
None	72.5	227
In Another Town	6.1	19
In Christchurch	18.5	58
No Response	2.9	9
TOTAL	100.0	313

TABLE 30

CONTINUING CONNECTION WITH OTHER CHURCHES BY PREVIOUS CHURCH AFFILIATION

	Previous Church Affiliation																Total	
	None %	N	Angl. %	N	Meth. %	N	Presby. %	N	Baptists %	N	Pente. %	N	Other %	N	NR %	N	%	N
None	100.0	52	64.6	31	55.6	10	70.0	21	71.4	20	76.8	53	60.6	40	0.0	0	72.5	227
In another town	0.0	0	4.2	2	0.0	0	13.3	4	7.1	2	8.7	6	7.6	5	0.0	0	6.1	19
In Ch'ch	0.0	0	27.1	13	38.9	7	16.7	5	21.4	6	14.5	10	25.8	17	0.0	0	18.5	58
No Response	0.0	0	4.2	2	5.6	1	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	6.1	4	100.0	2	2.9	9
TOTAL	100.0	52	100.0	48	100.0	18	100.0	30	100.0	28	100.0	69	100.0	66	100.0	2	100.0	313

TABLE 31

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY YEAR FIRST CAME  
TO CHRISTCHURCH APOSTOLIC

Year first came	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
Before 1960	2.9	9
1960-69	5.8	18
1970	0.3	1
1971	1.6	5
1972	4.8	15
1973	3.8	12
1974	6.1	19
1975	12.1	38
1976	14.7	46
1977	17.6	55
1978	25.9	81
TOTAL	100.0	313

TABLE 32

YEAR RESPONDENTS FIRST CAME TO CHRISTCHURCH APOSTOLIC BY DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT

Year	Degree of Involvement										Total	
	Visitor %	N	Friend %	N	Regular %	N	Member %	N	NR %	N	%	N
Before 1960	0.0	0	0.0	0	1.1	1	5.2	8	0.0	0	2.9	9
1960-69	0.0	0	3.1	1	3.4	3	9.2	14	0.0	0	5.8	18
1970-75	10.0	4	15.6	5	21.8	19	39.9	61	100.0	1	28.8	90
1976	12.5	5	15.6	5	19.5	17	12.4	19	0.0	0	14.7	46
1977	12.5	5	18.8	6	13.8	12	20.9	32	0.0	0	17.6	55
1978	52.5	21	46.9	15	34.5	30	9.8	15	0.0	0	25.9	81
No response	12.5	5	0.0	0	5.7	5	2.6	4	0.0	0	4.5	14
TOTAL	100.0	40	100.0	32	100.0	87	100.0	153	100.0	1	100.0	313

TABLE 33

RESPONDENTS PREVIOUS CHURCH AFFILIATION BY YEAR FIRST CAME TO CHRISTCHURCH APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Previous Church Affiliation	Year first Came														Total	
	Before 1960		1960-69		1970-75		1976		1977		1978		NR			
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
None	33.3	3	16.7	3	17.8	16	13.0	6	9.1	5	21.0	17	14.3	2	16.6	52
Anglican	11.1	1	5.6	1	15.6	14	17.4	8	16.4	9	14.8	12	21.4	3	15.3	48
Methodist	11.1	1	0.0	0	5.6	5	4.3	2	9.1	5	6.2	5	0.0	0	5.8	18
Presbyterian	0.0	0	16.7	3	14.4	13	13.0	6	3.6	2	7.4	6	0.0	0	9.6	30
Baptist	0.0	0	16.7	3	11.1	10	6.5	3	7.3	4	7.4	6	14.3	2	8.9	28
Pentecostal	11.1	1	27.8	5	21.1	19	28.3	13	25.5	14	17.3	14	21.4	3	22.0	69
Other	33.3	3	16.7	3	14.4	13	15.2	7	29.1	16	24.7	20	28.6	4	21.1	66
No response	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	2.2	1	0.0	0	1.2	1	0.0	0	0.6	2
TOTAL	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0	90	100.0	46	100.0	55	100.0	81	100.0	14	100.0	313

TABLE 34

## PREVIOUS CHURCH AFFILIATION BY DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT

Previous Church Affiliation	Degree of Involvement											
	Visitor		F of F'ship		Reg.Attender		Comm.member		NR		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
None	10.0	4	12.5	4	20.7	18	17.0	26	0.0	0	16.6	52
Anglican	12.5	5	34.4	11	16.1	14	11.8	18	0.0	0	15.3	48
Methodist	12.5	5	3.1	1	8.0	7	3.3	5	0.0	0	5.8	18
Presbyterian	7.5	3	3.1	1	10.3	9	10.5	16	100.0	1	9.6	30
Baptist	12.5	5	3.1	1	12.6	11	7.2	11	0.0	0	8.9	28
Pentecostal	17.5	7	28.1	9	16.1	14	25.5	39	0.0	0	22.0	69
Other	27.5	11	12.5	4	16.1	14	24.2	37	0.0	0	21.1	66
No Response	0.0	0	3.1	1	0.0	0	0.7	1	0.0	0	0.6	2
TOTAL	100.0	40	100.0	32	100.0	87	100.0	153	100.0	0	100.0	313

TABLE 35

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHEN THEY BECAME  
A CHRISTIAN

Year	Proportion of Respondents	
	%	N
Before 1960	13.1	41
1960-69	16.9	53
1970	2.3	7
1971	2.9	9
1972	6.7	21
1973	8.9	28
1974	6.1	19
1975	8.6	27
1976	5.1	16
1977	5.1	16
1978	4.8	15
Yes, unspecified	8.3	26
No response	11.2	35
TOTAL	100.0	313

TABLE 36

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY DATE THEY PASSED  
CHURCH "LANDMARKS"

Year	Water Baptism		Baptism in Holy Spirit		Right Hand of Fellowship	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Before 1960	7.0	22	4.5	14	4.2	13
1960-69	8.9	28	8.0	25	2.6	8
1970-75	27.8	87	34.2	107	8.6	27
1976	5.8	18	9.6	30	3.5	11
1977	8.0	25	6.1	19	10.5	33
1978	6.1	19	6.1	19	13.7	42
yes, unspecified	5.8	18	7.3	23	3.8	12
No response*	30.7	96	24.3	76	53.0	166
TOTAL	100.0	313	100.0	313	100.0	313

\* The size of the 'no response' categories in this table are interesting because they reflect the number of respondents who have not gone through these stages (as well as some people who did not answer the question).

TABLE 37

DATE RESPONDENTS WERE BAPTISED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT BY DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT

Date	Degree of Involvement											
	Visitor		Friend of Fellowship		Regular Attender		Committed Member		NR		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Before 1970	7.5	3	9.4	3	4.5	4	18.9	29	0.0	0	12.5	39
1970-75	20.0	8	25.0	8	26.4	23	44.4	68	0.0	0	34.2	107
1976-78	27.5	11	12.5	4	29.9	26	14.4	27	0.0	0	21.8	68
Yes, unspecified	5.0	2	9.4	3	6.9	6	3.3	5	100.0	1	7.3	23
No response	40.0	16	43.8	14	32.2	28	11.8	18	0.0	0	24.3	76
TOTAL	100.0	40	100.0	32	100.0	87	100.0	153	100.0	1	100.0	313



TABLE 38

DATE RESPONDENTS TOOK THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP BY DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT

Date	Degree of Involvement											
	Visitor		Friend of Fellowship		Regular Attender		Committed Member		NR		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Before 1970	7.5	3	3.1	1	2.5	2	9.8	15	0.0	0	6.8	21
1970-75	5.0	2	3.1	1	0.0	0	15.7	24	0.0	0	8.6	27
1976-78	5.0	2	0.0	0	1.1	1	55.0	84	0.0	0	27.7	87
Yes, unspecified	0	0	3.1	1	4.6	4	4.6	7	0.0	0	3.8	12
No response	82.5	33	90.6	29	92.0	80	15.0	23	100.0	1	53.0	166
TOTAL	100.0	40	100.0	32	100.0	87	100.0	153	100.0	1	100.0	313

## CHAPTER FIVE: FUNCTIONING OF THE CHURCH

### Introduction

This chapter presents findings of participant observation of church activities. While the Christchurch Apostolic Church has a wide range of activities, as can be seen from a church notice-sheet (see Appendix), only the Sunday services and house group meetings are attended by a substantial proportion of church members. These activities were therefore chosen for study, as they were central in the life of the church. The findings on each activity will be presented in the form of a description of a typical meeting.

### Sunday Morning Service

To the church leaders, the central item on the church's programme is the Sunday morning service, which all church members are expected to attend regularly. This is related to the third item on the list of "The Apostolic Rules of Belief" found on the Apostolic Church of New Zealand Right Hand of Fellowship Card: "Your presence in meetings of the Church and abidance in full Communion; that is, not to absent yourself more than three consecutive times from communion without giving sufficient reason." In general, members fulfil this expectation, attending the morning services consistently.

The morning service is held in the Limes Room of the Christchurch Town Hall, and is scheduled to start at 10 a.m. Numbers of people attending the services are too large for the church's chapel in Colombo Street, but the change of venue brings other

constraints; for example, the time of the morning service was changed from 10.30 to 10.00 at the beginning of the period of observation, in order that the Limes Room might be used for another function in the afternoon. On occasion the James Hay Theatre has been used by the church as an alternative venue, but this is considered less suitable because of the restriction of movement caused by the seating arrangements. It is also colder, and darker, because the lighting is arranged to light the stage rather than the whole room.

It is necessary for the Limes Room to be "set up" for the church service, and a "management team" is organized to do this each week. These people arrive early and arrange the seating in rows of five in a semicircle facing the western wall. Against this wall is the platform, with lecturn and microphones, one on a stand and one that clips round the speaker's neck. At the back are several chairs for the song leader, preacher, and elder or elders who are overseeing the meeting. To the audience's right of the platform are the grand piano and organ, and to the left, the overhead projector and screen. In front of the lecturn is the communion table with the elements covered with lace cloths. To the right of the organ is a screen, behind which preparation for the service is done, such as the filling of the glasses for communion. A corresponding screen on the other side of the platform is used by the leaders for preparation for the service. Books and records for sale are displayed on tables to the extreme right of the seating. A wide range of Christian literature is available, and there is a special stand on which books related to the church's current teaching are displayed.

The entrance to the room is at the eastern end of the northern wall. As people enter for the service, they are greeted by two or three people at the door, who hand them a notice-sheet and a songbook, and occasionally some other thing which is being handed to everyone, such as Apostolic News. To the left, as people enter, is the tape set-up where the meeting is taped and tapes may be borrowed. Further on is a coal rack, and a screen on which notices may be displayed. To the right there are several tables, on which piles of songbooks are placed, and additional literature such as water baptism studies and Above Rubies, a magazine for women. There is a space between the door and the seating in which people stand and talk before sitting down. Many people pause to talk before they sit, especially if there are few people seated. Many look round for friends to sit with, and it is noticeable that certain types of people sit in different parts of the room. People with young families sit in the area nearest the door, to make it easier to slip out if their children become restless. The middle section is the domain of the older members, and the young people tend to sit on the southern side, furthest from the door. Within these blocks, the more committed members of the church tend to sit nearer the front, while visitors are more often found near the back. When the seats are getting full, ushers stand at the back directing people to empty seats. The last seats to be filled are at the front on the southern side, because they are a long way from the door and side on to the platform. The middle section is the most pleasant to sit in because from there one can see the overhead projector screen easily, and also whatever is happening on the platform.

For several minutes before the service starts, the musicians play softly in the background. During this time there is a general buzz of conversation, with people leaving their seats to talk to their friends, or talking with the people next to them. The service begins with the song leader announcing the first song. This is not done at 10 a.m. precisely, but rather when the leader and musicians are ready. There are a number of men who act as song leaders occasionally, but in the morning Pastor Meehan often does this. The first song is often a transition into the service, with people continuing to talk and to take their seats, so that the song is only taken up slowly. This song is sung three or four times, and after this or perhaps one or two more songs the song leader welcomes people to the service and prays, asking that the building will be cleansed from any evil spirits or influences that remain from its use for other purposes, and that the people will be cleansed from their contacts with the world. He asks that God will speak to the people in the service. The congregation are quite responsive during the prayer, saying "Hallelujah" and "Yes, Lord" in places to signify their agreement. "Amen" is not always used at the end of prayers: the leader is likely to say "Hallelujah" or "Praise the Lord" several times at the end.

The service continues with more singing. The songs are mainly chosen from Songs of Praise, which is supplemented with other songs on the overhead projector. During the period of observation, several new songs were added to this repertoire, taught to the congregation by someone who had learned them elsewhere. There are a certain number of songs which are the church's "current

repertoire", according to Pastor Meehan. These songs "work well" because everyone knows them well and sings them with enthusiasm. When people don't know a song very well, they look at their songbooks, or at the screen, but when they know them well they are free to clap, to shut their eyes, to raise their hands and to move their feet in time with the music, but will not always do this. The first songs in the service are generally lively, fast songs which are easy to clap to, and later on in the service when the people are more warmed up and responsive, slower, quieter ones are used in which people often shut their eyes and raise their hands. This raising of the hands with palms open is considered to be a sign of openness to God, of worship and adoration. Some people do this quite often, and others never. The majority, however, do it now and again, perhaps twice or three times during a service.

A number of the songs have tunes that make it almost certain they will be clapped to; sometimes clapping is started spontaneously in the congregation, and on other occasions the song leader starts it off. Occasionally at the end of a song people continue clapping for some time, and it turns into the sort of clapping associated with applause, with most people joining in enthusiastically. Pastor Meehan commented that this was a recent development in Apostolic services.

Another thing that may happen at the end of a song is a time in which people express themselves to God in any way they want to. The song leader usually starts by saying or singing "Hallelujah", "Glory to God" or other similar phrases, and the people join in

with "Hallelujah", repeating "Jesus, Jesus", or putting together words from choruses that have been sung. Some speak in tongues. This is part of the service because it is felt that it is important for individuals to participate in the service and express themselves to God, and it takes them out of themselves and focusses on God. The amount of participation varies: sometimes there is a wave of sound as the musicians play and the people sing, shout and clap, and other times it is very quiet. The song leader watches what is happening, and announces the next song when he feels the people are ready for it.

There may be two or three praise sessions interspersed with singing in the morning service. After one of these there is usually prophecy. Sometimes the song leader asks for people to speak, saying that he knows that there are some prophecies waiting to come out. Pastor Meehan explained that there is a climate of prophecy which is "like a pregnant wait in the service - something's there, God wants to speak - just a sensation or mood you get to recognise." There are a number of people who often prophesy in the service, and they are recognised as having the gift of prophecy. The prophecies are considered to be messages from God to the people, so they are spoken as if it were God speaking; that is, in the first person. They are usually several sentences long, and say something like this: "My people, I am pleased with your praises, saith the Lord. My children, my heart warmed to you this morning as you have sung to me. And now, my people, I want you to open your hearts to receive more of me. Yes, I would fill you with my love this morning, if you would open your hearts to me." There may be

longer prophecies, often in the form of analogies; for example, saying that the people are like vessels, some full, some empty, some whole, some broken, but the Lord wanted to join them together into one vessel (Morning Service, 20 July).

Because anyone is free to contribute, it is recognised that sometimes what people say is "human", rather than being from God, and is therefore not authentic. People are encouraged to speak out anyway, because they will learn from their mistakes. Pastor Meehan commented that the prophecy is often interrupted by people speaking out of order and going off on a tangent. He considered that during the period of observation there had not been "a great significant thing coming through in prophecy", and attributed this to lack of preparation by the mature people with the gift of prophecy. He commented, however, that his preaching should be saying what God wants to be said, as well as the prophecy. This link between prophecy and preaching is often observable in the services: both are exhorting the people to respond to God and to become mature together. The church has a programme of ministry planned to develop the idea that the people are living stones of a living temple in which God dwells, speaks to his people, rules over them and goes with them into the world to extend his kingdom. This programme had been worked through since the beginning of the year, and by November Pastor Meehan considered that the ruling stage had been reached in the teaching, although not in the experience of the people, but he hoped this would follow. Because he is working to a programme like this, Pastor Meehan has his sermons well worked out, and is not keen to set them aside. On occasion he has "given away"



his sermon and preached extemporarily on a theme that has come through in prophecy.

A number of things may happen in the middle of the service. One frequent feature is the "time of fellowship" which takes a number of forms, all designed to get people talking and communicating. They may be allowed to talk to whoever they like, but sometimes the leader gives people instructions to talk about a certain thing to the person next to them. Sometimes they are asked to share needs and pray in small groups, and sometimes there is a list of prayer items on the overhead projector which everyone is asked to pray for. These are usually to do with members of the congregation who have a particular need, often illness or bereavement. Sometimes fellowship occurs nearer the beginning of the meeting, because Pastor Meehan uses it for loosening people up when the meeting has a low spirit and people seem unresponsive. He commented that although it is often difficult to get people back to their seats and listening to the song leader, after fellowship he can start doing things.

Another movable part of the service is the announcements, which may be before or after the sermon and communion, depending on the spirit of the meeting and how many announcements there are. Firstly, those who have not got announcement sheets are asked to raise their hands so that the ushers can give them one. Then the Pastor reads out and explains some of the items on the sheet, saying, for example, that the next baptism will be on the following Sunday afternoon, and anyone who wishes to be baptised should fill out a blue study sheet which they can pick up on the

way out of the service, and then bring it to a meeting at the chapel one night during the week when they will receive further instruction. The other sort of announcement is related to what members of the church have been doing, or future activities for the whole church, and this may involve people coming up and talking briefly about what they have been doing (a report on a camp for instance) or what is being organized. At this point, there may be prayer for these people or for others who are sick, or absent for some reason. For example, if the Pastor is away somewhere he will be prayed for. Handouts to be picked up at the door, like Apostolic News, may also be mentioned.

Once a month during the service, the Right Hand of Fellowship is extended. This is the church's official membership institution, and people who choose to join attend a meeting during the week before the service, in which the Pastor explains the church's structure and beliefs and the people are free to ask questions. Pastor Meehan describes taking the Right Hand of Fellowship as identifying with the life and ministry of the Christchurch Apostolic Church, and explains that it indicates to the church's leaders that the person concerned is committed to the church, and therefore he is likely to be given a job to do within the church. Pastor Meehan said that the majority of people already feel that they are a member of the church when they take the Right Hand of Fellowship, and that it is only outward recognition of the fact. In 1978, an average of about eight people took the Right Hand of Fellowship each month. At the service this involves the people coming forward, being greeted and prayed over by the Pastor and elders. They are given a card outlining the church's

expectations of members (see Appendix).

Another occasional event is the dedication of infants, which does not occur regularly but whenever it is requested by parents.

The parents bring the child forward, and Pastor Meehan takes it in his arms, prays that it will grow up to serve the Lord, kisses it and shows it to the congregation.

The Praise Group, of about twenty young people, sometimes sings at this point, and may teach the congregation a new song.

Next comes the sermon, which in the morning lasts about twenty minutes to half an hour, depending on how long the first part of the service has taken. Speakers often comment that they are cutting bits out because of time. During the observation period, Pastor Meehan spoke on about half the Sunday mornings, and the speakers on the other occasions were visiting Apostolic pastors and men from the local church, and outsiders on two occasions only.

The sermon is usually based on a passage of scripture, relating it to the Christian life, giving examples and stories, backed up by Bible references, and ending with an encouragement to the people to do something in response, to develop in some area of Christian life and commitment. This theme is linked with the overall programme of "living stones in a living temple" previously referred to.

In the morning the sermon is followed by the communion (usually,

although occasionally the communion precedes the sermon). It is usually administered by the Pastor, but occasionally some other person who has been speaking does it. This person stands behind the table and asks eight people to come and assist by handing out the elements. There is a different group chosen each week, all with something in common. For example, young couples have been used, old people, men who are fairly new to the church, people from a certain house group, and so on. It is only recently that women have been used in this: until now it had been a traditionally male role. With the use of house group members it would be awkward to use only men because there would probably not be enough men in the group.

The pastor or leader repeats the description of the institution from 1 Corinthians 11: 23-25, and hands the plates to the assistants who pass them round the congregation. Instead of using bread, as many churches do, the Christchurch Apostolic Church uses matzohs, the unleavened bread for the Jewish Passover. The people are asked to "retain the biscuit so we can all partake together" and when the assistants return their plates to the table the pastor prays and everyone eats their piece of biscuit. Then the trays of grape juice are handed round in a similar fashion, so that everyone gets a glass, and again all drink together. The children who are present participate as well as the adults: there is no restriction as to who may join in. The glasses are collected and returned to the table, and covered by the lace cloths. Compared to the liturgical churches, this is a most informal act, partly because there is very little build up to it, and partly because the people remain seated

throughout.

The musicians have been playing during the communion, and they also play during prayers and praise. Pastor Meehan has a system of signals to tell them to play louder or quieter, faster or slower, and to tell them what key a song is in when he announces it. During the communion they play whatever they think is suitable, and often Pastor Meehan has the congregation sing what they have been playing at the end of the communion.

The offering may come at the end of the service, or with the notices. In the morning the money is sent to the national headquarters of the church to be redistributed to pay pastors' salaries and other costs. This system is used because of the varying sizes of the churches, and the fact that all pastors are paid the same, so the larger churches subsidize the smaller ones. It is felt that members of the church should give a tithe (one tenth) of their income to the church in the mornings, but this is not done by everyone. (However, when the people were asked to give or to promise \$15,000 in one Sunday for extensions to the Colombo Street buildings, the whole amount was received that day.) During the offering a hymn is sung. This was formerly chosen from the Redemption Hymnal, but as there were insufficient copies of this for everyone, a number of hymns were typed out and bound with the Songs of Praise songbook into a new cover entitled Sing.

The service ends with the offering being taken forward by two ushers and being prayed for, and then a final song is sung.

The whole service takes about two hours. The Pastor goes to the main door immediately after the service to greet all the people on the way out, and another couple take the other door. Some people leave immediately, but many stay around to talk, for up to three-quarters of an hour. As they leave, the Pastor shakes their hand and says "Bless you" to them, occasionally having a brief conversation with people or asking strangers who they are and where they come from. He writes this information in a notebook. He is noted for his ability to remember people's names, and he notices who is present at each service.

Overall, the form of the service is very flexible, with a number of basic features that may appear in different order, and some extras which are included as necessary. There are a large number of people actively involved in every service, and different people who may take each role: there are several song leaders, musicians, preachers, ushers, and so on.

### Evening Service

The evening service is also held in the Limes Room, and is attended by slightly fewer people than the morning service, although numbers fluctuate. Many of those who have been to the morning service return in the evening, although some older people only attend once, and often only one of a couple with young children will attend. The congregation is augmented by some of the church's young people, who do not usually attend in the morning but are regular evening attenders, and by young people (and some older ones) from other churches, who visit Apostolic occasionally. About 200 usually attend the evening service.

Although the service contains many of the same elements as the morning service, they are arranged differently, producing a service that is quite different in character from the morning service. This is recognised in the announcement sheet: the morning service is described as "Worship and Communion", while the evening service is called an "Inspiration Rally". The service commences with singing, the same as the morning, and this is always led by a song leader. There are a number of young men who take turns at this, while Pastor Meehan sits on the stage observing what is going on. He sometimes comes and whispers something in their ear, presumably giving them advice about what to do next. He also gets involved in singing and praise enthusiastically, acting as a model for the sort of behaviour that is appropriate in the situation.

There is more singing in the evening than in the morning, and

and prophecy is less frequent. Occasionally, at the end of a time of praise some women will sing songs which are believed to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, in a similar way to prophecy. One woman will start, and several others may follow, one at a time. Occasionally someone will say something in tongues or sing and the leader will decide that it is not an inspired utterance and cover it up by starting to talk or to sing another song. On rare occasions there is a message in tongues which is expected to be followed by an interpretation. There is often a pause after the message until Pastor Meehan says that someone must have the interpretation, and asks for anyone to say what went through their mind as the message was being spoken. This may occur in either the morning or evening service.

Times of fellowship, announcements and the offering are included in the evening service in much the same way as in the morning service, and are usually led by Pastor Meehan. The sermon follows, and in the evening service tends to be longer than in the morning, and to occupy a more important place in the service. The theme of the evening sermon is often linked to what has been preached in the morning, especially if the preacher is the same person on both occasions, and this is often the case. The preacher in the evening never leads the singing, except perhaps for a couple of songs before and after the sermon. If Pastor Meehan is preaching, he usually takes over from the song leader after the singing and leads the rest of the service.

The sermon is similar in style to the morning one, but tends to have more stories and illustrations in it because of its greater



length, and to cover more points. This seems to be an attempt to say something that is relevant to everyone in the congregation, because they represent a variety of age groups and Christian backgrounds.

After the sermon there is a prayer which relates to what has been preached, and while everyone has their eyes shut, anyone who wishes to become a Christian is invited to make some kind of signal to the Pastor, who tells them he has seen them. During the period of observation there were a number of occasions when no one responded to this invitation, but on other evenings several people did. Following this, the elders and house group leaders are asked to come to the front to counsel and pray for anyone who wants this. On average about half a dozen people go forward to be prayed for, although on occasion twenty or more may do so.

The service concludes with singing and perhaps a prayer. Again, many people stand around talking for some time after the service. These are mostly the regulars, who know lots of people in the church, and they would be likely to have conversations with several people rather than having a longer talk with one group. Visitors who have friends in the church may stay talking to them for some time, but otherwise they may be more likely to leave fairly soon, especially if they are not accustomed to attend two hour services. Groups of young people are often leard to make arrangements to go out to supper after the service, either at a coffee house or at someone's home.

There is a distinct difference in atmosphere between the evening and morning services, the morning one being more family-oriented than the evening one, and involving more the committed members of the church, while the evening service draws more outsiders and is directed towards people at all levels of Christian experience and commitment. Traditionally, the evening service in the Apostolic church was a gospel service, an outreach to the unsaved, but its present nature is more of an encouragement to people who are already Christians, because most of the congregation are in this position. An opportunity to make a public decision to become a Christian is always given, but this is just one part of the service rather than its climax. The counselling session involves a few more people, but the majority are spectators to this as well, and are obliged to wait while it is conducted, some of them feeling rather restless at this stage and eager for the service to finish.

### House Groups

Since its early days, the Christchurch Apostolic Church has had some kind of meeting for church members during the week, but it is only in the last few years that house groups have been developed. There is a trend towards small groups in many churches at the present time, both in New Zealand and overseas. Small prayer groups are characteristic of the Charismatic movement. In the Christchurch Apostolic Church at the present, the house group has a particularly important cohesive role, helping to hold the church together by giving members the opportunity to get to know a small group of people well, and to contribute spiritually in an accepting, supportive setting. In 1978 there were sixteen house groups, all but one running on Tuesday nights at 7.30 p.m. The other one is on Friday night. One group is the First Principles Group, which runs eight week courses on basic doctrine for new Christians or those who want some basic teaching, after which these people are fed into house groups.

The organization of house groups is centralised: on Wednesday nights a meeting of leaders is held in which the leader of each group has to report back on the previous evening's meeting, having first filled out an evaluation sheet which asks for comments on time spent in fellowship, prayer, praise and worship, and Bible discussion, as well as details of those attending. Studies are prepared and duplicated for the use of the groups by one of the church leaders, and these are distributed weekly, together with a study leader's guide. The theme of the study is chosen to tie in with the teaching in church services. These studies are intended as a suggestion for leaders rather than a

compulsory study, and the leaders are at liberty to use their own judgment in deciding what their group should do. Not all weeks have a prescribed study: about one in five is a "freewheeler" which may be used for an informal meeting, an evening in which two groups combine, or a study on a topic that is particularly relevant to the group. This freewheeler often occurs after a series of studies on the same topic.

Although all groups have a common purpose, there is variation between them because of different styles of leadership and differing needs of members. Some groups are homogeneous as to age and Christian experience while others have members of differing levels of maturity. People are free to choose a house group for themselves, and may do so using a number of criteria: convenience of location, liking and respect for the leaders, friendship with other members of the group or preference for a certain type of meeting.

I attended one house group regularly for several months as a participant observer, and in this time gathered some idea of how the group worked. Attendance varied considerably, from five to sixteen, but over the whole period the group increased in size from seven to twelve regular attenders plus the leaders, and some occasional attenders. The group was led by a husband and wife in the lounge of their home. The husband led the studies, and his wife was usually present, although on a few occasions she had to look after her children or talked to one of the girls in the group while the group was in progress. When she was present, she participated frequently in the praise sessions and in the

study, and led the singing.

The core of the group was a number of young men who had all been to school together, and several young women who were friends. Many of the group were involved in Youth for Christ and Living Springs in some way, and so they had experiences and acquaintances in common. There was usually a considerable amount of joking and "stirring" among the men in the group: it seemed that though they were sincere Christians, they would have been uncomfortable in a wholly serious meeting, so they lightened the atmosphere by joking. Spiritual topics were not exempt from this, and the use of religious cliches such as "I felt led to do so and so" was common in their joking. This joking was sometimes enjoyed and sometimes resented by the other members of the group, but when they were required to participate in prayer or discussion, the jokers quickly became serious and joined in, switching modes rapidly. The only time when this was difficult was when the formal part of the meeting began with singing, and then people often had difficulty keeping a straight face when they caught someone's eye.

The members of the group were all of a similar age, in the 18-21 bracket, and mostly had been Christians for about four years. Few had parents in the Apostolic Church. They had similar levels of Bible knowledge and understanding, but some were markedly quieter and less ready to contribute and to talk about their experiences than others.

Most people arrived a little after 7.30, and there was general

conversation while people arrived. When most people had arrived the leader call the group to order, and sometimes gave out the study sheet at this point. He asked someone to open in prayer, and then there was some singing, songs from the church's current repertoire, accompanied by one of the girls in the group on the guitar. At the beginning the singing was often not very serious, but as everyone warmed up they would begin ti put more feeling into it, shutting their eyes and forgetting the other people around them. After a number of songs there was a transition into prayer and praise, with people thanking the Lord for things he had done, praying for people in the group, and asking that God would speak to the group tonight. There was the usual murmur in the background of people speaking in tongues quietly, and others saying "Praise the Lord", "Hallelujah", "Thank you, Jesus". The guitarist strummed softly while this was going on, and occasionally she or someone else suggested a song and everyone sang it. Usually this time would begin with everyone standing up, and slowly people would sit down as they got tired of standing. Towards the end of the praise time, there would sometimes be prophecy, or someone would tell the group what they believed the Lord wanted them to do next. Only some members of the group contributed in this way.

When the leader felt that the members of the group had run out of things to pray about ("...You can tell by the atmosphere, if it's still alive and the people want to share things ... it's pretty sudden I find, the spiritual activity sort of drops off and the Holy Spirit's saying "Okay, that's about it") he prayed a winding up sort of prayer and then introduced the study. He

sometimes used the study sheet as given, and sometimes took part of it to talk about. Sometimes he gave out a passage of scripture for everyone to meditate on, and then went round the group giving each person a turn to say what they had discovered. The members of the group did not generally display a great degree of interest in the study. The leader felt that most of them knew the Bible reasonably well, and so was not particularly concerned if the study did not promote enthusiastic discussion. After the study, the leader asked someone who had not participated very much to close in prayer. At this point notices might be given, such as what the group was doing next week. Some of the girls went out to the kitchen to help with the supper, and the rest of the group sat round talking until it was ready, and then moved through to the dining room. People stayed talking for a while over supper, and then went home about 10 p.m.

Most of the group members placed a fairly high priority on coming to the group, and rang to apologise when they were unable to attend. Occasionally the reason given was that they were too tired, but usually it was something more substantial. The leader told the group if people had phoned, and members of the group conveyed apologies from their friends. It was frequently suggested that people pray for those who were absent.

A frequent theme in the prayer at the beginning of the meeting was that the group had gathered together out of the midst of the working world to spend some time with God and to be refreshed. This is an important part of the house group idea, that because it is in the middle of the week, it brings religion down to an

everyday level rather than being for Sundays only. The idea of a small closely-knit group sharing and growing together is another important part, and the fact that it meets in a home rather than a public setting helps members to feel that it is their group and they are free to do what they want in it. The leaders enhanced this in the group that was observed, by taking up a critical attitude towards the church structure and administration, sometimes supporting what had been done and explaining it to the group, and sometimes agreeing with their disapproval of what was going on. This does not imply that the group was dissatisfied with the church as a whole, but merely because most of them were strongly tied to the church, they were sometimes disappointed with what happened or did not understand what had been done. This is, in fact, another function of the house group, bringing the average member closer to the leadership of the church, because the opinions of young people are not often sought, but if the group feels strongly about something they can relay the message via their house group leader. He also has the responsibility of relaying information in the other direction.

Most of the house groups are led by a married couple, and the responsibility rests on both partners rather than just the man. The sharing out of who does what is worked out between them, each using their abilities. For example, in the group observed, the wife was musical and encouraged everyone to sing, while the husband led the study. The group leader does not necessarily have to be the teacher in the group; someone may take the study but not have the overall responsibility for the group.



Because leading a house group involves two nights a week, for the house group meeting and the leaders' meeting, as well as preparation time, and pastoral care of group members, it is a considerable responsibility. The house groups are seen by many members of the church as crucial in looking after a congregation of 300 people. Being attached to a small group gives members a much stronger bond to the church than merely being a member of the congregation: it gives them people who know them and care about them, and it gives them opportunities to participate where they might be unwilling to do so in the church services. Pastor Meehan sees the house groups as an ideal place for developing a gift of prophecy. After experience in a small group, young prophets may develop their gift and their confidence enough to participate in church services.

Overall, the house group can be seen as a learning situation which helps people to participate more fully in the life of the church, including the worship services.

Summary

The morning service, evening service and house groups of the Christchurch Apostolic Church are shown to be similar in the type of activities involved, but each has its own purpose.

The morning service is the gathering of church members, the evening service a time of inspiration, and the house groups allow church members to be tied more closely into the group and to develop spiritual gifts.

## CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to draw together some of the findings presented in the previous chapters and to attempt to make sense of them together. This will begin with a look at some of the questionnaire findings, followed by an examination of the church's ideology, and how it is reflected in church activities.

### Comment on Findings

#### Age

An examination of the questionnaire findings shows that the age structure is closely related to background characteristics of the population. Because the majority of respondents are under thirty years of age, it is not surprising that many are unmarried, and few have children. They are also likely to have become Christians recently, which is related to the fact that adolescence is a time when many people make decisions about the rest of their lives, typically asking such questions as "Who am I?", "How should I spend my life?", "What is really worth doing?" and so on. "The period of youth is characterised very strongly by a search for 'authentic' values and identity" according to Berger and Berger (1976, p 246). Berger and Berger also comment on an upsurge of interest in religion in youth culture in recent years (1976, p 253). One might also suggest that young people would be more likely to change churches than older people, because traditional allegiances might be less important to them than a satisfying present experience. The informality and enthusiasm of the services at Christchurch Apostolic Church

could also be seen as more appealing to younger rather than older people.

With respect to the functioning of the church, it is interesting to notice that although there is a preponderance of young people among the members, it is the older people who hold the responsible positions in general: they are not evenly shared out among the age groups. The allocation of responsibilities is not related to the time a person has been a church member: older people who have joined recently have been given leadership roles (of house groups, for example) while some people who have been attending the church for years have no official responsibilities. The explanation for this is related to maturity: for example, those who prophesy in church services are those with mature gifts of prophecy, while the younger members are encouraged to develop their gifts by using them in a house group setting. This was the case in the house group that was observed: members were frequently urged to share what they thought God was saying. The leaders appreciated that it was much easier to gain confidence in speaking out in a small group than to start participating in services, and they gave positive feedback by thanking God when anyone spoke. Few young people contributed in the Sunday services during the period of observation, although occasionally the Pastor specifically asked for contributions from them in the service.

Another factor which is related to age is the mobility of the population. A comparison of the "Members and Friends List" of April 1978 with that of April 1979 shows substantial changes.

While there are a considerable number of names which appear on both lists, there are also many appearing on the 1978 and not on the 1979 list, and vice versa. Overall, there is a net gain for 1979. In part, this can be explained by the stage in the life cycle which many members have reached. Many come to Christchurch from other places to study, and leave again when they have finished their studies. They may also have jobs in which they are shifted round, school teachers being an example.

The large percentage of visitors to the church who are in the under 20 age group may be explained by the fact that people of that age are more interested in shopping around among the churches, and are more free of responsibilities in other churches which might prevent them doing so.

#### Education

The questionnaire findings show that there are a large number of respondents who either have university degrees or are still studying. The population overall could be said to be well-educated, and while it may be the well-educated people who are highly mobile (as the previous section suggests), this may produce a congregation with a higher percentage of professional people in a few years. This would imply that the church's income will rise as individuals' incomes rise, assuming that they are tithing their money to the church. If all the young people in the church continue to attend, it is likely that as they marry and have children, the children's church will grow.

### Growth

The growth of the church in recent years has been substantial, and seems to be continuing. The findings showed that although there were some respondents who had no former church connections, most respondents had some church background before they came to Christchurch Apostolic. The data is not very clear at this point, since there is no information as to respondents' level of involvement in their previous churches, only what denomination they were. Thus some may have been highly committed to their former church, while others may have been only nominally affiliated with it. One can say, however, that most respondents have had some religious socialisation before they came to Christchurch Apostolic. They have had some previous involvement in church life.

If one can assume that the necessary conditions for transfer growth to occur are a perceived advantage in membership of Christchurch Apostolic Church compared with membership in mainline churches, and friendship links between members of Christchurch Apostolic and the mainline churches in question, then the growth rate may be affected by a number of factors. The comparative advantage of Apostolic membership may disappear, through changes either in the Christchurch Apostolic Church or in the mainline church. All those who are recruitable through friendship links may be recruited, and thus growth may cease. (Gerlach and Hine cite a case where this happened.)

One might say that the Apostolic Church is "charismatic" in the sociological sense, that it is attractive to those outside

and tends to draw them in. This situation has not existed throughout the history of the Christchurch Apostolic Church: until recently it bore the stigma of being a Pentecostal church, which meant that it was seen as off-beat religion. With the advent of the Charismatic renewal, the label "Pentecostal" ceased to be a stigma: it tended rather to be a draw. It was at this time that people began to transfer from mainline churches to Apostolic and opened up friendship links along which more people could be recruited. This brings us back to Gerlach and Hine's finding that recruitment to Pentecostalism occurred along lines of pre-existing relationship. Although feelings of deprivation and a search for personal identity may predispose an individual towards accepting Pentecostalism, if he/she has no contact with Pentecostalism other alternative strategies may be used to cope with the situation.

Gerlach and Hine also found that individuals were recruited not to a movement but to a cell within a movement, and they were recruited by members at grass roots level rather than by leaders. They found that the humblest members were charismatic in recruiting, and were effective evangelists. From this one might conclude that church growth also depends on these "grass root" members and their sense of mission, in attempting to relate their experience to their relatives and friends and draw them into the group.

### Ideology

According to the Pastor of the Christchurch Apostolic Church, belief is the common denominator that holds the members of the group together, and consequently he considers that there is a high level of uniformity of belief among church members. The basic criterion for church membership is that one must hold the basic beliefs of the church, especially those which affect church life. The view of the church is that there is a definite relationship between belief and action, so that if one believes that the Bible is the word of God, when one discovers that there is a Biblical injunction to do a certain thing then one will automatically wish to do it. Therefore, much of the church's teaching is directed to making members aware of the applications in everyday life of Biblical passages. This type of teaching always aims at engendering a response rather than simply understanding, and this is particularly demonstrated in the "altar call" in the evening service.

The whole service is an expression of the ideology of the church, through use of language and concepts pertaining to it, through the different parts of the service. An encouragement for people to contribute is an expression of the "priesthood of all believers", prayers express the expectation that God is present, is listening and is ready to act in the situation. The communion is used to demonstrate the unity of the group, and the offering is a demonstration that one should be willing to give one's money for the work of God. The songs are an especially clear expression of ideology, covering many areas of belief both about God and man: "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel/ Who only



doeth wondrous things ...", "God forgave my sin in Jesus' name", "There's a river of life flowing out from me", "I'm a conqueror, I'm victorious/ I'm reigning with Jesus", "To get a touch from the Lord is so real".

The house group situation also caters for the spread of beliefs, both in the studies, in which some official teaching of the church is conveyed, and in sharing, where members learn to express their experiences in the concepts they have learnt. This is noticeable in replies to the question "Why do you continue to come?" in the questionnaire. The committed members of the church explained their reasons for coming in terms of God having told them to come, and that this church is their spiritual home. This demonstrates the view that in any situation there is one course of action which God wants an individual to take, and one should therefore find out what that course of action is, and follow it. The fifth of the Apostolic Rules of Conduct reads: "Make the local church your spiritual home and show a responsible attitude and a willingness to be involved in the work of the Lord." This carries an implication that there are duties involved in church membership, in the same way as family members might be expected to share duties round the home. A substantially different view of the church is reflected here compared with the personal satisfaction motivation reflected in those who responded "I like it" or "The service suits me - more alive, friendly, etc".

Another aspect of the ideology is that the dichotomous world view (see p 33), which includes the conviction that non-Pentecostals are not experiencing the full blessings that God has provided

for them, creates an incentive for evangelism. The questionnaire findings were that the majority of respondents had attended the church in the company of friends on the first occasion. This is similar to Gerlach and Hine's finding that the majority of their respondents had had initial contact with Pentecostalism through a person whom they already knew. Those who are enthusiastic about the church and who find it more satisfying than the one they have come from will tend to spread the word among their acquaintances, hoping to persuade them to join and share their experience.

The basic assumption of the "priesthood of all believers" can be expressed in diagrammatic form thus:

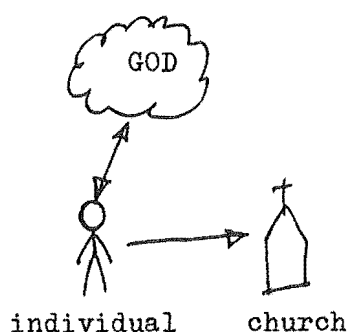


Figure 1

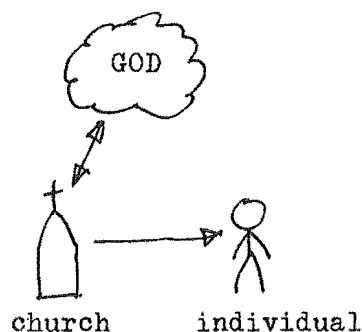


Figure 2

Figure 1 shows the individual in a direct relationship with God, with communication from either side, while Figure 2 is an expression of the alternative church-centred viewpoint, where the church mediates between the individual and God. Wilson has found that sects commonly emphasise this doctrine of priesthood of all believers (1959, p 4) while it might be argued that the model in Figure 2 is more typical of institutional churches.

The Christchurch Apostolic Church holds the view that each individual is responsible for his/her own relationship with God and that God gives the individual spiritual gifts to use in the church for the benefit of other people. This applies both to church leaders and church members: all should share together the insights God has given them. Thus God may speak to an individual through someone else, and it is the individual's responsibility to respond to this. Since individuals are responsible primarily to God and only secondarily to men, the Christchurch Apostolic Church leaders encourage individuals to be responsible for their actions by allowing them to make decisions about their course of action rather than using pressure to make them do what the leaders consider appropriate. This can be seen in operation in a number of areas within the church. Firstly, there is always an opportunity given in the evening service for anyone who wants to to acknowledge their decision to become a Christian. This is always seen as an agreement between the individual and God, but it is also seen as important that they tell someone about it, so they are encouraged to do so, and also to join the First Principles group and work out what it really means.

Following this there is the time when people can go forward for prayer with the elders and house group leaders, and this again is a situation where an opportunity to do something is extended, but it relies on people's individual response, and only a small proportion of the congregation take the opportunity on each occasion.

Water baptism and the Right Hand of Fellowship are also presented as voluntary. The Sunday before either is to be offered, the notice-sheet contains details of how people can take part. Both involve attending a meeting during the week in which the significance of the acts is explained, and then people are required to decide for themselves if they are going to proceed. Although the decision rests with the individual, there is some informal encouragement for people to take these steps in the enthusiastic way that those who do are mentioned in church services. Thus being baptised or taking the Right Hand of Fellowship could be seen as something which pleases the church leaders. Being baptised is something which is expected of new converts, but those who come to the church by transfer from churches which practise infant baptism have to come to their own decision to be baptised by total immersion as an adult.

Participation in church services is something which all members are urged to do, but again it requires the individual to take some initiative. Occasionally people might be asked to speak about a certain thing, but they are at liberty to refuse. In general, the invitation is given for all members to participate rather than to specific individuals, especially in prophecy, and exclamations of praise. Sometimes during the service someone will go up to the Pastor and ask if they can say something, which shows people making use of the flexibility and openness of the services.

Church members are expected to attend church services, and when they are absent for a couple of weeks the Pastor sends them some

church notice-sheets, with the intention of letting them know what is happening in the church. This carries a latent message that their absence has been noticed, and that they should try to come next Sunday. It would seem to be effective, from the comments of those who have received the notice-sheets in the mail. Pastor Meehan said that he would not contact anyone personally, simply because they had not been at church services; it was up to them whether they came or not. Although the leadership do not chase people up like this, their friends may, and it is likely that church members do press their friends to come and participate.

House groups may also follow people up, especially those who have shown some commitment to the group. An individual may be influenced by his/her friends when beginning to attend a house group: if they enjoy it they may encourage him/her to join one too. This may have much more influence on him/her than a notice in the notice-sheet. This is Gerlach and Hine's argument reappearing: the influence of friends on individuals. It may also apply to other situations, so that if a person's friend is baptised or attends an evening service they may consider doing so themselves. It is not likely to apply so much to speaking in church, however. It is important to remember, though, that individuals do have the ability to choose to do something different from their friends, so this is not a complete explanation.

### Church Services

Services in the Christchurch Apostolic Church could be characterised as enthusiastic and informal, requiring involvement and participation rather than passivity. Worship is a central feature of the services, which is significantly different from Evangelical services as characterised by Michael Harper:

"Evangelical worship tends to be word-centred ... Worship takes a very secondary role to that of the reading and exposition of the scriptures" (1979, p 66). He goes on to state that "The charismatic renewal has done much to restore worship to its central place in the Church" and that new features have emerged, with worshippers being more active and physical in their worship, and songs being more God-centred, corporate expressions of worship, simple and "eminently singable" (1979, pp 66-67).

John Gunstone writes of the worship of a congregation as an expression and an inspiration of its corporate life:

It is an expression of its corporate life because what people do and say when they assemble in church will be influenced by what they believe it means for them to be members of the body of Christ; it is an inspiration because what they do and say will encourage them to manifest the love of God in their daily encounters with others.

(Gunstone, 1978, p 87)

Those present have been actively participating in the service, and thus it is more likely that it will have had some effect on them than if they had been a passive audience. Church members remark that they "feel good" after a service, and strangers comments that there is a happy atmosphere, that people seem to be enjoying themselves. One of the things Pastor Meehan hopes

to do in a service is to get people to forget about themselves and focus on God, which is what Kiev found to be psychotherapeutic in his study of West Indian immigrant Pentecostals in Britain (see above p 17).

Although all the people present are encouraged to contribute to the services, there is strong leadership from the front. An appropriate simile might be that of a conductor and an orchestra, the leader attempting to draw the best from each person and to tie them together into a unified whole. In this way, the service can be seen as an expression of corporate life, as Gunstone comments, and further it may be pointed out that the direction in which the corporate life develops may be dependent on the policy of the leaders to a considerable extent. They can decide on constraints on the service: that it should always include some features, that so much time should be spent in singing, and on the sermon, and that it should finish at a certain time. The leaders are seen to be responsible to God, and their decisions on such matters are supposed to be based on his direction.

All those present do not identify themselves as committed members or regular attenders of church activities: almost one quarter of respondents perceived themselves as visitors or friends of the fellowship. Both of these categories imply that the individual is not a full part of the body, and this may affect the way they experience church services. Rather than taking part, they may be an audience to the "expression of corporate life" that is taking place. This is a fundamental problem in discussing the church as a collectivity: the

variation in levels of involvement means that those present are not necessarily united in belief and purpose. Provision for this is made in the church services by having leaders explain what is happening and why things are done: the Right Hand of Fellowship, for example, would be introduced with a statement that those who are participating are showing their commitment to the life of the church. Such explanations also reinforce meanings for members so that the definition of the situation is clear.

Because the services are oriented towards participation and towards challenging those present to change and to commit themselves more fully to Christ, it is difficult for outsiders to attend without being confronted by the church's message. As the members are all involved in creating an atmosphere where their world view is seen as a total package, the stranger is forced to either accept or reject the whole thing. The component parts of the service all link together to form a united whole, and this is demonstrated by the fact that respondents found it difficult to respond to the question "What do you like most about this assembly?" in terms of only one factor. They brought a number of factors in and some even ticked all the alternatives. One interpretation of this is that they have accepted the whole package and have difficulty in isolating what is important to them.

Pastor Meehan speaks of the service as a finely-tuned, high-performance engine from which he is trying to get the maximum performance, or as a theatrical performance with lots of little jigsaw pieces that fit together to make the whole thing. Both



these analogies imply that all parts of the service are functional and work together to produce the total impact. The aim is to get the people to the peak of responsiveness, faith, joy, and fellowship, according to Pastor Meehan. His preparation for the service involves preparation of options, of parts that might be included, and he puts them together as the service develops, depending on an intuitive, spiritual feeling for the situation.

At the beginning of the service his aim is to "take the people into God", "to get them lost from their own need-consciousness, from human problems, and conscious of God". Once that has been achieved, then the ideas of the day can be developed, and people will begin to respond. The extent to which his aim is achieved in any service depends on the responsiveness of the people as well as on his skill and sensitivity in leadership: the situation is not completely under his control as he does not know how people will contribute, and although he may anticipate the way people will respond in a situation, their response is in their own hands.

### House Groups

Although only half the respondents attend house groups regularly, most of the committed members of the church are involved in house groups. In current Christian literature small groups are often seen to have an important role in the church, catering for different needs from those fulfilled by church services. Michael Harper (1977, p 145) considers that the measure of commitment that people are prepared to make is inversely proportional to the size of the group, so that the smaller the group, the greater the commitment is likely to be.

In the small group people can really meet each other and be committed to one another. The masks of self-deception and distrust can be removed ... Commitment in the small group is much more demanding. People will immediately notice if we are absent, and also if we are out of sorts. The strongest churches, and those most likely to grow and go on growing are those with many small groups of committed people, which are themselves, as groups, one hundred per cent committed to the larger group which they support.  
(Harper, 1977, pp 145-147)

Howard Snyder (1977, p 129 ff) has also argued that the small group should be the basic structure in the modern church. He outlines a number of advantages of small group structure: it is flexible, mobile, personal, and can grow by division, can be an effective means of evangelism, requires a minimum of professional leadership, and is adaptable to the institutional church.

Other examples are C. Peter Wagner's Your Church Can Grow (1976) in which he discusses three levels of meeting; celebration, congregation, and cell, and John Gunstone's Renewal and Congregational Life (1978) which discussed prayer groups along with other types of meetings.

Members of the Christchurch Apostolic Church also see the groups as being of considerable functional importance in holding the church together. Because it has grown so rapidly in a short period the house groups have served as an anchor point for people, and are important in providing pastoral care.

From the available data a relationship can be seen between level of involvement and participation in house groups. It may be that those who attend house groups become more committed to the church as a whole through their reinforcement of church values and ideology, or it may be that those who are highly committed to the church feel that they should support house groups because they are part of the church's programme. These two possibilities are not mutually exclusive, and it may well be that they work together to maintain commitment.

The house group situation gives each individual more opportunity than they have in the larger setting to participate in activities that are a part of church services. They can lead the group in prayer, prophesy, and suggest songs to sing. Other activities that contribute to the individual's understanding of the church include the studies, discussion of other church activities, sharing experiences and asking for advice. Supper gives further opportunity for informal discussions with people.

Gerlach and Hine's comment that people are recruited to a cell rather than a movement (1970, p 95) may be relevant here. It may be the case that some individuals are committed principally to a house group rather than to the church as a whole. The

leaders of the house group under study commented that some members of that group were more regularly at house group than at church services. The extent of such a tendency cannot be determined from the data of this study because it focussed on those who attended church services. It would be interesting to see whether a study of house group participants produced the same results as those from the questionnaire undertaken.

### Leadership and Gender

The ideology of the church gives men and women spiritual equality: "There is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, between slaves and free men, between men and women; you are all one in union with Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28) Female members of Christchurch Apostolic Church have the same relationship with God and the church as male members, and there are no distinctions in rights and duties of membership. There is, however, a distinction between men and women when it comes to authority: men are considered to have overall responsibility for leadership in the family and in the church. The marriage relationship is seen as very important as it brings man and woman together into a team. The man is the head of the family, but husband and wife work together to serve God, the wife supporting the husband. An example of this in practice is found in church notice-sheets: husband and wife are associated together with any spiritual responsibility; the Pastor and his wife, the elders and their wives, and so on. This seems to be an acknowledgment that these positions are not just jobs to be done, but extend into the rest of the family's life. The Bible makes a link between family and church leadership: among the qualifications for eldership, a church leader "... must be able to manage his own family well and make his children obey him with all respect. For if a man does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of the church of God?" (1 Timothy 3:4,5)

The house groups are also led by husband and wife teams. The advent of such groups may in fact be changing the place of women in the church, since they are held in the home, the woman's

traditional area of responsibility, and allow the husband and wife together to run the group and show hospitality to group members. The way the leadership of meetings is shared varies among couples, and this relates to spiritual gifts: either sex may be a teacher, and either may be musical and lead the singing and worship. By making house group leadership a joint role, it could be argued that the church is elevating the marriage relationship, rather than simply the position of women, since it is married women who have access to new responsibilities, and then only with their husbands.

One area which seems to be a male domain is church administration: the deacons, managers and management team leaders are all males. Their wives are not listed with them as sharing the responsibility: it seems to be an all-male preserve. The reason for this is unclear.

Overall, men appear mostly in public leadership in the church, while their wives back them up from the home. When it comes to contributions in church services, however, both genders may participate in their own right.

### Summary

This chapter includes a discussion of some of the research findings. Firstly, age was discussed as an independent variable, and it was shown that the age structure of the group affects its functioning. It was suggested that the proportion of respondents who were involved in higher education might lead to future changes in the church. The basis of growth was examined.

The church's ideology was discussed, with an examination of how it is expressed in church services and house groups, and comments were made on the functioning of these activities. The relationship between leadership and gender within the church was discussed.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

In relating the theoretical material to the data collected, it seems most useful to view the Christchurch Apostolic Church as one cell within a large and diverse social movement, the Pentecostal or Charismatic Movement. Social movements are studied from the collective behaviour perspective in sociology.

Collective behaviour may be defined as behaviour that is new in some way, and the behaviour that is associated with Pentecostalism can be seen as new in two ways: it is new to those participating in that it has to be learned on joining a Pentecostal group, and it is new to society at large since it differs from conventional expectations of religious behaviour in Western society.

Gerlach and Hine (1970, p xvi) define a social movement as:

a group of people who are organised for, ideologically motivated by, and committed to a purpose which implements some form of personal or social change; who are actively involved in the recruitment of others; and whose influence is spreading in opposition to the established order within which it originated.

Pentecostalism complies with this definition, firstly in that Pentecostals are committed to a transformed personal relationship with God and to a revitalised church; secondly, in that Pentecostals recruit others by sharing their experiences and inviting people to attend meetings; and thirdly, in that it is spreading among the established churches in opposition to the traditional way of doing things. Whether it draws opposition from people depends on their openness to change, and their degree of certitude about their present doctrine.



The leaders of the Christchurch Apostolic Church share this perspective on the church. Rather than seeing their church as only part of the Apostolic Church in New Zealand, they recognize ties of kinship with other individuals and churches in Christchurch, throughout New Zealand, and overseas. They see themselves as Pentecostals, and are pleased to be so identified.

Thus the perspective is doubly useful, since it fits in with both the literature and the group's self-image. In this chapter, the perspective of the Christchurch Apostolic Church as a cell within the Pentecostal movement will be developed with respect to a number of areas already discussed in this thesis: the church's relationship with the rest of the movement, ideology, recruitment, leadership and membership. Finally, some suggestions for further research will be made.

Christchurch Apostolic Church and the Charismatic Movement

It is no coincidence that the dramatic growth of the Christchurch Apostolic Church during the 1970's has occurred in a period when the Charismatic Movement was having a considerable impact on the Christchurch Christian scene. The early seventies were years when the Charismatic Movement began to "take off" in Christchurch, and those from mainline churches who were participants in the movement looked to the Pentecostal churches for leadership, and many transferred their membership to these churches, including Christchurch Apostolic.

This process continues. Newcomers to the church in 1978, for example, had previously been affiliated to a number of different mainline churches (and to other Pentecostal churches). Many people from these mainline churches maintain a link with another church in Christchurch while attending Christchurch Apostolic. Further evidence is that visitors to the church come from a range of backgrounds, as do regular attenders and committed members. It is interesting to note that people shift around among Pentecostal churches as well as coming to them from non-Pentecostal churches. This would seem to suggest that Pentecostal churches are not all seen as being the same, but that there might be reasons to prefer one to another. (Although some shifts can be explained by people moving from one town to another, the majority have shifted within Christchurch).

In summary, then, the Christchurch Apostolic Church can be considered to have benefitted from a general movement of people around the churches of Christchurch, which was stimulated by the Charismatic Movement.

The image of the Christchurch Apostolic Church in the Christchurch Christian scene could be described as "conservative Pentecostal" where conservative has the connotation of moderate or not too way out, and some respondents commented that the type of service suited them better than that of other Pentecostal churches they had attended. The considerable number of respondents who stated that they continued to come because they saw the church as their spiritual home, or who liked the friendly atmosphere and the fellowship, could be seen as some indication of their feeling at ease in the type of service Christchurch Apostolic has.

Some characteristics of the Christchurch Apostolic Church can be seen to pertain to the Pentecostal movement in general, others have their origins in the Apostolic Church, and yet others are local developments. Those which are common to other Pentecostal groups are many, ranging from the basic doctrine which is very similar to that of other Pentecostal denominations (see Worsfold, 1974, for doctrinal statements), the type of activities included in the worship service, the special vocabulary used to express concepts and experiences, and the songs sung. The ideas that are preached are often current in many groups simultaneously, having been spread around by leading Pentecostal teachers or writers. Although the basic doctrine is prescribed, there are wide possibilities for different emphases and encouraging interest in different areas such as the future and the end of the world, healing, evangelism, missions, and so on.

A strong emphasis is placed on music in most Pentecostal services, including singing of short songs which are usually repeated.

several times. Many of these songs are known by many Pentecostal churches, so that the Pentecostal churches in Christchurch have a similar repertoire. The Songs of Praise songbook is in general use in both Pentecostal and mainline churches, and this means that there is a common pool of songs, although not all churches use the same songs from the book. An overhead projector is frequently used for other songs, thus enabling the addition of new songs to the churches' repertoires. Some of these new songs spread around the churches, and since they are usually short with simple tunes they can be learned quickly. Singing is seen as an effective way of bringing people together and getting them to express thoughts and feelings. It thus fulfils an important role in Pentecostal services, and so tends to be managed rather efficiently. Singing is also an important feature of other Pentecostal activities like prayer meetings and house groups. It is seen as a more expressive activity in Pentecostal churches than in mainline churches.

There is a special jargon employed in Pentecostal circles, ranging from expressions like "Hallelujah" and "Praise the Lord" to conversational phrases like "The Lord led me to ..." and "We're believing God for ..."

All these things, the similar teaching, singing, and jargon, facilitate communication between different cells of the movement, making it easier for people to pass from one to another and understand what is going on, and there is a common basis for joint activities. The Christchurch Apostolic Church has links with other Pentecostal churches in Christchurch on a number of

different levels. The Pastors of the various churches meet together, and some visiting evangelists and healers are jointly sponsored by a number of churches. Church members belong to Christian organizations like the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International and the Women's Aglow Fellowship, and may attend camps, seminars, films and studies held by other groups. There are many informal links between friends which foster communications about what is happening at the various churches, and invitations are issued to other groups to attend special activities that one church is putting on.

Gerlach and Hine's description of the Pentecostal movement as "decentralised, segmented and reticulate" seems to fit the Christchurch Apostolic Church well, in summary. What happens in the Christchurch Apostolic Church influences and is influenced by other parts of the movement, which has its fundamental basis for unity in its common ideology.

On the other hand, some of the features of the Christchurch Apostolic Church originate not from the influence of the Pentecostal movement in general, but specifically from the Apostolic Church background. One such feature is the church structure, its government from the top down rather than from the bottom up, so that the Pastor and elders are appointed to their positions by those in authority over them, rather than by popular vote. The local church is an oligarchy, according to the Pastor.

Another notable feature is that the majority of visiting speakers

are pastors of other Apostolic Churches, which must foster communication among church leaders about what is happening in the denomination throughout the country. The church's financial system is also a national one, linking all the Apostolic churches and giving them common goals. Church policy on issues like remarriage of divorced persons is set by the National Council rather than by local churches.

There is also the area in which the practices of the Christchurch Apostolic Church have been determined not by outside influences but rather more by the local situation: a prime example would be the working out of how the church services are run according to the venue. Although the Christchurch Apostolic Church has strong bonds with the other Apostolic churches in New Zealand, it has its own distinctive character which has been built up by the different leaders. The particular population structure of the local church must have some bearing on what is done: for example, in a large congregation with many newcomers it becomes more important to take time for fellowship and to encourage people to talk to those around them than it would be in a small group where any newcomer would be obvious and would be spoken to by members of the church after the service.

The segmentary nature of the movement is evident: each local unit can be seen as a distinct cell having its own character which has a basic similarity to that of the other cells in the movement but is in detail unique. As Gerlach and Hine comment, "Each tends to develop a kind of 'style' of its own, each 'does its own thing', each has its own specific goals and means" (1970,

p 42). These different cells draw different types of people to them according to their different age groups, socio-economic status, theological standpoints and so on. For example, it is not surprising that young people are attracted to Christchurch Apostolic Church which already has a large number of young people attending it.

Since these different groups recognise common goals and beliefs, although each values its individuality, they link together for common activities and feel that they belong to the same movement. Through travelling speakers and literature, churches in Christchurch are linked with other parts of the world, especially America. The Apostolic Church in New Zealand also has links with the parent church in Britain. The church members are aware that they are part of an international movement, and that their experiences and beliefs are shared by people in many different countries. Their first loyalty is to the particular cell or church they belong to, but there is also a sense of kinship with other Pentecostals wherever they are encountered.

## Ideology

Douglas B. McGaw defines "charismatic" thus:

By "charismatic" we mean that the group places a strong emphasis on what is called "rebirth in the Spirit", "born-again", or "pentecostal" Christianity. This emphasis derives from St Paul's Biblical reference to the charismatic "gifts of the Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12: 4-11). The gifts include wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, glossolalia (speaking in tongues), and interpretation of tongues. Generally the charismatic emphasis lays great stress on glossolalia, prophecy, and healing, though specific congregations may differ on this.

(McGaw, 1979, p 149)

This is a useful definition because it suggests that although there is common ground among charismatic groups there are also differences between groups as to the amount of stress given to different parts of the message. The ideology can be seen as common to the whole movement, with each cell in that movement having its own variations on the basic theme. Although doctrinal details differ, the view of God and man and the world is similar. God is the omnipotent creator, who gives man the power to live in the world and overcome the forces of evil, if he will only listen and respond to what God ordains. The Christian has supernatural power on his side and can make use of this power to change situations. The world is alienated from God and under subjection to evil, but God will finally judge the world and only born-again Christians will be saved.

In the Christchurch Apostolic Church there is an emphasis on individual needs of people - the church has a total message for the whole person according to the Pastor. It is seen to be important for each member to mature as a Christian and to live up to their full potential, which includes using their spiritual



gifts to build up the church. When people have problems and difficulties that are inhibiting their progress, the church's task is to help them realise that they have a problem and to encourage them to look to God for help. In general, a very positive view of life is preached, with stress on the fact that God loves every individual and that everyone should co-operate with him and live out their lives in accordance with his plan, which will result in joy and happiness for them. An underlying idea is that life is a progression, a learning process all the way, and every person needs to be challenged to go further in their relationship to God.

The way the ideology is expressed in church activities, as discussed earlier, bears of resemblance to the practice of other churches, but the details of what is done are specific to the Christchurch Apostolic Church. For example, the communion is common to most Christian churches, and involves the people sharing a symbolic meal, but the ritual surrounding this, and what the elements consist of, vary enormously among churches. For some it is the central focus of the service, but in Christchurch Apostolic Church it is only one component part of the Sunday morning service, and the emphasis placed on it changes from week to week.

Many of Gerlach and Hine's comments about ideology of social movements can be applied to the Christchurch Apostolic Church. The dichotomous world view is found in the conversation of church members as well as in church services, particularly in the categorization of people, activities, churches, and experiences.

There is a strong practical emphasis on spiritual gifts in the church, and the role of the individual participant in the development of the group is considered to be important. The "party line" is also quite apparent in the language of members. For example, "Praise the Lord" is a common response to hearing some good news, and reflects an underlying belief that God has caused these events to take place. Since this expression is common to many groups, it facilitates communication between them by acting as an indicator of a whole world view.

### Recruitment

Growth is one of the goals of the Christchurch Apostolic Church, and this means a growth in the number of people who adhere to the church's belief system. In practice, this results in increasing numbers of people attending church activities, since the belief system involves behavioural prescriptions, one of which is church attendance. Berger and Luckmann have argued for the importance of bringing people into a group to reinforce and maintain their commitment to a world view, and Gerlach and Hine's findings also show the significance of group interaction. Many of those who come into the church come from other churches, because they have ties with people who are already members of Christchurch Apostolic. These people are in some way vulnerable to alternation, to a switch of world views, or at least to some degree of change, and it is through interaction and conversation with church members that the new reality can be apprehended. In this way, recruitment occurs without the church having an official programme to engender it.

The church's focus is on confronting people within the church meetings: at the present time, new people are coming without any great effort by church leaders to encourage members to bring friends, and this might be explained in terms of the current religious climate in Christchurch, and in particular, the impact of the Charismatic movement. Growth is a common feature of many Pentecostal churches at the present time, but the people who are being recruited may vary among the churches. The majority of those who are coming to the Christchurch Apostolic Church are young people, while other churches may attract other age groups.

### Leadership

The Pastor of the Christchurch Apostolic Church is highly respected by church members, and even visitors to the church are impressed by his leadership. The label "charismatic" could be applied to his leadership in two senses: firstly, in the religious sense, as being endowed by the Holy Spirit with the ability to lead, to preach, to discern which direction a meeting should go in, and to counsel. Secondly, in the sociological sense, he can be seen as an attractive personality, inspiring enthusiasm among his followers. As the leader of the Christchurch Apostolic Church, Pastor Meehan symbolises to some degree what the church stands for, and liking the Pastor may make a difference to people's reactions to the church as a whole. Decision-making is not his prerogative, contrary to what Turner and Killian suggest; although he is one of the responsible leaders, decisions are made by the group.

In terms of Brinton's decision-making skills, the first type, discovery of basic ideas or theories, does not apply to the leaders of the Christchurch Apostolic Church, since the basic doctrines are agreed on by all Apostolic churches, and beyond that, come from the Pentecostal movement as a whole. On the local church level, ideas are spread, people are influenced to act on them, personal loyalties of followers are developed, and leaders of other groups are liaised with, and this is done by the church leaders. Although the Pastor leads the way in many of these things, other people are involved with him in determining the church's development.

The doctrine of spiritual gifts means that the people have different areas of expertise within the church, so that some are preachers, others musicians, administrators, and so on, and thus Gerlach and Hine's term "polycephalous" can be applied to the local church as much as to the movement as a whole. The qualifications for leadership within the church are, in general, spiritual rather than bureaucratic: experience and maturity are of more value than diplomas and certificates.

### Membership

The Christchurch Apostolic Church can be described as fairly homogeneous in terms of age and social background, but there is a range of levels of involvement from visitors to committed members, as the findings show. This is related to how long people have been in contact with the church. Respondents also gave a variety of reasons for participation, and their suggestions for improvements in the church showed that they had many different concerns for the church.

Officially, becoming a member of the church involves taking the Right Hand of Fellowship, but half the respondents had not done this although over 70 per cent attended morning services at the church regularly, which shows that they must be aware of the practice. Most of those who identified themselves as "committed members" of the church had taken the Right Hand of Fellowship, whereas very few of the group who perceived themselves as "regular attenders" had done so. Thus the church has a sizable group of people (about one quarter of the respondents) who are fairly closely affiliated with it but would not claim to be totally committed. Another group of about one quarter of respondents identified themselves as "visitors" or "friends of the fellowship", and these people's contribution to the life of the church might be considered to be attendance at services only. The services work on the general assumption that all those present have the same needs, to worship God and to be challenged to become more like him, and this is a reflection of the ideology. All are seen as equal before God, as his children, and are therefore brothers and sisters to each other. Newcomers are

accepted and made welcome on this basis.

Some members of the church have special responsibilities, and these are allocated on the basis of the perceived gifts of the individual and his/her Christian maturity and commitment to the church. There is a kind of cyclical process here, in that an individual's showing a high level of commitment to the church may result in his/her being allocated some responsibility, which will, in general, lead to increased commitment. Other correlates of high levels of involvement are increased knowledge and understanding of the church's ideology and increasing acquaintance and friendship with other church members. The individual's view of the church may also change, and his view of his place in it: this is reflected in reasons given for participation, and suggested changes.

Although Gerlach and Hine have said that people are members of a cell rather than a whole movement, there is a certain sense in which becoming a member of the Christchurch Apostolic Church makes one a member of a wider movement. Firstly, being a member of the Apostolic Church makes one definable as a Pentecostal to outsiders, because the doctrine of the church is in common with other Pentecostal churches. Since the church supports or endorses interchurch and parachurch activities such as Festivals of Praise, Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, and visiting speakers, one is likely to be introduced to other Pentecostal activities. This may include visiting other Pentecostal churches to attend services, especially when well-known speakers are visiting.

On the other hand, many of the respondents in the study felt that Christchurch Apostolic Church was their spiritual home, and this would indicate that their first loyalty was to this group. For some, as has been previously suggested, the house groups within the Apostolic Church may be the cells to which they are committed, rather than the wider church.

There are a number of expectations of members of the Christchurch Apostolic Church. Firstly, a church member should subscribe to the basic doctrine of the church, as set out on the Right Hand of Fellowship card. This includes being baptised in water and being baptised in the Holy Spirit. The church is based on a set of beliefs, and is only open to those who share them. Those who do not hold these beliefs are welcome to attend church activities but may not become full members of the church.

As well as believing, members are expected to attend church activities, especially the Sunday morning communion service, and to participate, using their spiritual gifts to minister to others. Members are also expected to contribute financially to the work of the church.

These expectations are made clear so that only those who complied with them would consider themselves full members of the church. Some concomitants of membership are learning the language of the group, and having the church become a more central concern in their life, having everyday significance rather than just being a Sunday activity. The amount of time spent on church concerns must increase. Church activities and church concerns thus pervade



all aspects of a member's life.

### Studying Pentecostalism

In the literature, much of the discussion of Pentecostalism has placed considerable emphasis on speaking in tongues. Gerlach and Hine explain this:

The type of religious behaviour that characterises the (Pentecostal) movement and sets it apart from conventional Christianity, even of the most fundamental type, is the practice of glossolalia.

(Gerlach and Hine, 1970, p 2)

They go on to discuss speaking in tongues as a "bridge-burning" act, which constitutes a point of no return, since it is an unmistakable sign of commitment to the movement and is unacceptable behaviour in the wider society.

McDonnell agrees with scholars who argue that

from the point of view of cultural anthropology and the dynamics of movement growth there would have been no classical Pentecostal movement without tongues as the commitment act (the socially unacceptable gesture by which one commits oneself to the movement and

identifies with it.

(McDonnell, 1976, pp 1-2)

As a theologian, however, he argues that speaking in tongues is a minor part of the total Christian life. Much of the psychological research he reviews, however, studies people who speak in tongues. This seems to reflect different perspectives of "insiders" and "outsiders" to the movement. Because speaking in tongues is socially unacceptable behaviour it tends to stand out to the nonparticipant, who can regard other characteristics of the movement as unproblematic since they are not distinguishing features in the same way. It is important to note that there are several schools of thought among Pentecostals today as to whether speaking in tongues is a necessary initial evidence of a person's having been baptised in the Holy Spirit. Those who take the classical Pentecostal view that it is the sign, would tend to view speaking in tongues as more important than those who do not, since they are in a sense giving it a special place among the spiritual gifts.

On the other hand, from inside the Pentecostal movement, speaking in tongues is not given as much attention as it receives from the outside. It is certainly a part of the life of individuals and of the church, but it takes its place among a range of other spiritual gifts, including healing and prophecy, which tend to be more important on a corporate level. This is certainly the case in the Christchurch Apostolic Church. Members of the church were highly committed to attending church activities, and these involved a wide range of behaviours among which speaking in tongues was relatively insignificant. It is definitely a part of church life, but a focus on speaking in tongues would not

produce a full understanding of what it means to be a member of the Christchurch Apostolic Church, or of why one might join such a church. The Pastor of the church stated that the church has a total message for the whole person, in which love, forgiveness, reconciliation, and co-operation with other people are important themes. Pentecostal teaching has its place, but it is only part of the teaching.

In summary, therefore, it could be said that while the Pentecostal churches in general, and Christchurch Apostolic Church in particular, have some special characteristics as Pentecostal churches, they have many other features in common with other Christian churches. An over-emphasis on studying these differences tends to reify a split that is historically but perhaps not currently valid. There is a contemporary trend among Protestant and Catholic charismatics to discuss the "charismatic Renewal" rather than the "charismatic movement", expressing the hope that the whole church will be renewed and gain a new understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church. Then there will be no more distinctions between charismatic and non-charismatic, and the charismatic teaching will be incorporated in the mainstream of church life. This is only one view, however. There remain some classical Pentecostals who have difficulty accepting the idea that traditional churches may be renewed, and this is reinforced by the number of people from such churches who have joined Pentecostal churches after experiencing "personal renewal". Communication between different parts of the movement, between classical Pentecostals and mainline charismatic, is breaking

down such barriers, and members of Christchurch Apostolic Church are aware of mainline churches in Christchurch in which they would consider God to be at work. There is a tendency to feel more at ease with those who share the same doctrinal standpoint, which reflects the fact that Pentecostal teaching is seen as an important part of the church's message, and there is a general belief that those churches which continue to resist "the outpouring of the Holy Spirit" will eventually die out.

### Suggestions for Further Research

There are many interesting things to be learned from studies of Pentecostal churches, and a number of new directions would logically follow from the present study. Firstly, it would be interesting to counter the common emphasis on speaking in tongues by examining instead the jargon used by Pentecostals and how it relates to the ideology, and how it enables communication between movement participants.

Another area of research would be a longitudinal study to follow the development of the Pentecostal and charismatic churches in their relationship to other churches over time. Will this lively branch of the church spread its influence throughout the church as participants suggest, or will it lose its impact by being institutionalised as Wilson might predict?

Finally, the Christchurch Apostolic Church could be studied in more depth by interviewing individual members on their experience within the church and their views of it. It would be interesting to replicate both the questionnaire and field work of the present study to assess the rate and direction of changes over time.

Overall, it could be said that the Pentecostal movement in general and the Christchurch Apostolic Church in particular are so dynamic that any observations made at one point in time will almost certainly be incomplete in a decade's time. Since the movement in New Zealand developed later than overseas but followed a similar pattern there may be some possibility of predicting trends in New Zealand on the basis of overseas events. Allowance has to be made for cultural differences, and this

might be another area for research: to what extent are overseas ideas incorporated into New Zealand Pentecostalism? Are there any distinctive New Zealand developments? What things are there that work in America but not here? There is much that could be done, but I would argue that a necessary starting place for studying Pentecostalism is in participant observation, so that the researcher has a feel for the type of situation he is studying. An understanding of what it means to be part of such a movement is invaluable for anyone who wishes to deal either with the movement as a whole or with parts of it. Such an understanding can only be gained through participant observation.

## APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY FOR THE CHRISTCHURCH APOSTOLIC CHURCH

August, 1978.

*For quite a long time I have wanted to ask our congregation questions like the ones prepared for this survey. I trust you will help us by completing the questionnaire because the results will be useful for our leaders. If you object to, or have difficulty in answering any question then please omit it and continue with the rest.*

- Pastor

This survey is confidential. You do not need to write your name on this form. Fill it out by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate box or writing on the lines provided.

1. How often do you usually attend services at the Christchurch Apostolic Church?

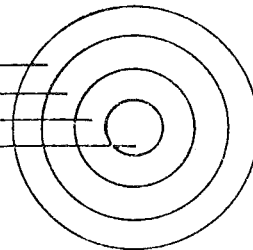
- ( ) twice a week  
 ( ) once a week  
 ( ) once a fortnight  
 ( ) once a month  
 ( ) less than once a month

2. Which of these activities do you attend, and how often?

ACTIVITY	REGULARLY	OCCASIONALLY	SELDOM	NEVER
( ) Sunday morning				
( ) Sunday evening				
( ) House group				
( ) Youth group				
( ) Young marrieds				
( ) Women's group				
( ) Children's Church				

3. Which circle, in this diagram, would you fit into?

- ( ) visitor  
 ( ) friend of the fellowship  
 ( ) regular attender  
 ( ) committed member



4. Before you came to the Christchurch Apostolic Church, did you have some other church connection or commitment to another Christian organisation?

( ) yes ( ) no

If yes, what? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you still maintain this or any other connection?

( ) yes ( ) no

If yes, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

5. What year did you first attend a service at the Christchurch Apostolic Church? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Why did you come on that occasion? ( ) read newspaper advertisement  
 ( ) came with friend  
 ( ) was recommended to come  
 ( ) heard Pastor speak elsewhere so came to see his church  
 ( ) other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

7. Why do you continue to come? \_\_\_\_\_



8. What do you like most about this assembly?

- ☐ teaching in services  
☐ music in services  
☐ fellowship  
☐ house group  
☐ organisation - the way the church is run  
☐ opportunities for Christian service  
☐ opportunities for the congregation to contribute in services  
☐ individual care for people  
☐ it is Pentecostal  
☐ other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

9. Are there any improvements you would like to see made?

☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

10. Please tick if you have at any time:

IF SO, WHAT YEAR?

- ☐ become a Christian  
☐ been baptised in water as an adult  
☐ been baptised in the Holy Spirit  
☐ received the Right Hand of Fellowship

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

NOW, A FEW CENSUS-TYPE QUESTIONS TO FIND OUT WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE MAKE UP OUR CONGREGATION.

11. Age group ☐ under 20 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 50-59  
☐ 20-29 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 60 and over

12. Sex ☐ male ☐ female

13. Marital Status ☐ married ☐ divorced/separated  
☐ widowed ☐ never married

14. Number of children living at home

☐ none ☐ 1 or 2 ☐ 3 or 4 ☐ more than 4

15. What country were you born in? \_\_\_\_\_

16. What is your occupation? Please be as specific as possible. \_\_\_\_\_

17. What is your gross personal income? ☐ 0 - 2,500 ☐ 7,500 - 10,000  
☐ 2,500 - 5,000 ☐ 10,000 - 12,500  
☐ 5,000 - 7,500 ☐ More than 12,500

18. What is your household's gross income? ☐ 0 - 5,000 ☐ 10,000 - 15,000  
☐ 5,000 - 10,000 ☐ over 15,000

19. What is your highest educational qualification?

- ☐ School Certificate  
☐ University Entrance  
☐ University Degree; specify .....  
☐ Trade or technical qualification .....  
☐ Teacher's certificate  
☐ Other - please specify .....

20. Any other helpful comments you would like to make regarding your experience of this church: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

APPENDIX B: RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP CARD

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## The Tenets of the Apostolic Church

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1. The one true and living God, eternally existent in three Persons in unity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. The divine inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture.
3. The inherent corruptness of man through the Fall; the necessity of repentance and regeneration by grace and through faith alone, and the eternal separation from God of the finally impenitent.
4. The Virgin Birth, sinless life, atoning death, triumphant Resurrection, ascension and abiding intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ, His Second Coming, and millennial reign upon earth.
5. Justification and sanctification of the believer through the finished work of Christ, and the resurrection of the believer in an incorruptible body.
6. The Sacraments of Baptism by Immersion, and of the Lord's Supper.
7. The possibility of falling from grace.
8. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit for believers, with signs following.
9. The nine Gifts of the Holy Spirit for the edification, exhortation and comfort of the Church which is the Body of Christ.
10. Church government by Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, Elders and Deacons.
11. The obligatory nature of Tithes and Offerings.

## The Apostolic Church New Zealand

The Apostolic Church, a world wide movement, is an outcome of the visitation of God generally known as the 1904-5 Welsh Revival. Ministers from the United Kingdom pioneered the Church in the early thirties in New Zealand and there are now congregations in all the cities and major towns.

## Right Hand Of Fellowship Card

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*"And when . . . , they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; . . ." (Gal. 2:9)*

---

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
AT \_\_\_\_\_  
BY \_\_\_\_\_ (LOCAL MINISTER)

National Offices For general administration  
72 Webb St., Wellington.  
P.O. Box 6201, Te Aro, Wellington.

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## The Apostolic Church Rules of Belief

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1. A personal testimony of your salvation in Christ.  
(Acts 4; 12. Rom. 10; 9-11)
2. Your acknowledgement of, and obedience to, the Order and Offices of the Church. (Heb. 13; 17)
3. Your presence in the meetings of the Church and abstinence in full Communion; that is, not to absent yourself more than three consecutive times from Communion without giving sufficient reason.  
(Heb. 10; 25. Acts 2; 42)
4. Your conformity with the fundamental doctrines of the Church, as well as with the two Ordinances namely Baptism by Immersion, and the Lord's Supper.  
(2 John 9. Rom. 6; 4. Luke 22; 19. 1 Cor. 11; 23-26)
5. That you contribute towards the support of the Lord's work through tithes and offerings as taught in the Word of God.  
(Mal. 3; 10. Lev. 27; 30. 1 Cor. 16; 2. Heb. 7; 8, 17. 2 Cor. 9; 7)
6. Show wisdom in discussing Church matters with those outside the Church.  
(Col. 4; 5-6)
7. As a member in the Body of Christ, pray for and help other members.  
(Heb. 10; 24. 1 Cor. 12; 25-26. 1 Tim. 2; 1. Gal. 6; 2)
8. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.  
(Eph. 4; 3)

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## The Apostolic Church Rules of Conduct

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1. Pray before coming to the house of God.  
(Matt. 6; 10. 1 Cor. 10)
2. If you are in your seat at the commencement of the service, you will be a good example to others.  
(Prov. 9; 17. 1 Tim. 4; 12b)
3. It is your privilege and duty to bring your children to the house of God.  
(Gen. 18; 19. Acts 10; 24. Mark 10; 13)
4. Make your Minister your friend. His sympathy, support and counsel are needed by you. Constantly pray for him.  
(Rom. 16; 35. Heb. 13; 17. 1 Cor. 2; 5a)
5. Make the local Church your spiritual home and show a responsible attitude and a willingness to be involved in the work of the Lord.  
(Acts 2; 40-47. Ps. 133; 1. 2 Cor. 3; 3-5)
6. Be wise and avoid speaking disrespectfully or criticising of God's servants or their ministrations, in the presence of your children.  
(Gal. 6; 7. Hosea 8; 7)
7. Take your Bible with you to the house of God.  
(Ps. 1; 2. 2 Tim. 3; 14-17)
8. Enter reverently; pray fervently; listen attentively; give praise from a grateful heart, and worship God in the beauty of holiness.  
(Ps. 100; 4. Ps. 118; 20-29. Eccles. 5; 1. Rom. 12; 11)

## APPENDIX C: SAMPLE NOTICESHEET

## House Groups

You are invited to attend one of our House Groups. Please feel free to go to the house or flat, or ring up the leader.

### TUESDAY 7.30 PM

- \* 1/5 Carlton Mill Road  
Ldr: Ian & Jude Bastion ph.61-250
- \* Belchers, 112 Warren Crescent  
Ldr: Barry Taylor 43-034
- \* Mrs Blake, 35 Strowan Road  
Ldr: Pat Blake ph.555-159
- \* 1/160 Geraldine Street  
Ldr: John & Shirley Bright ph.43-578
- \* Flat 4/5 Carlton Mill Road  
Ldr: John & Colleen Harrison ph.69-956
- \* Dixon's, 415 Bower Avenue  
Ldr: John Dixon ph.882-906
- \* Irons, 58 Dallington Tce  
Ldr: John & Glynne Purvis ph.855-165
- \* Langtons, 52 Cornwell Street  
Ldr: Graham & Marriene Langton  
ph.63-860
- \* 4/22 Champion Street  
Ldr: Lyndon McEntee ph.859-909
- \* McEwings, 118 Winchester Street  
Ldr: Alex & Fay Neas ph.858-497
- \* McNeills, 90 Opawa Road  
Ldr: Roger & Rona McNeill ph.35-517
- \* Richards, 248 Condeall Avenue  
Ldr: Ken & Eileen Richards ph.597-327
- \* Sumner, 13 Hardwicke Street  
Ldr: Rudy & Ans Hanson ph.266-304
- \* Townleys, 77 Woodham Road  
Ldr: Alan & Cheryl Townley ph.896-044
- NEW CONVERTS' GROUP
- \* 80 Nursery Road  
Ldr: Dave & Rose Ablett ph.896-742

### FRIDAY 7.30 PM

- \* 23 Puriri Street  
Ldr: Alan Marsden ph.41-829

## Next Sunday's Ministry

- |       |                    |               |
|-------|--------------------|---------------|
| Oct 8 | Management         | ) Alan and    |
|       | Creche             | ) Cheryl      |
|       | Offerings Stewards | ) Townley's   |
|       | Communion          | ) House Group |
| Oct 7 | Church Cleaning:   | Bas and       |
|       | Jennifer Howell    |               |

COOKS FOR CAMPS: If you would like to learn to cook at a camp see Bruce Knox.

CAR PARKING: Please only use the street parking in Kilmore Street opposite the Town Hall if your passengers are weak or elderly or you have to carry heavy equipment. Otherwise please leave spaces free for visitors. The Town Hall Management have asked us not to use their staff car park.



**apostolic church**

859 Colombo St, phone 791-255  
Pastor: Rex Meehan  
61a Aorangi Rd. Phone 516-958



**Apostolic  
Church**  
LIMES ROOM

SUNDAY 1ST OCTOBER 1978

~~We welcome you to our services~~

today. Please feel free to participate with us and enjoy the fellowship together.

## Today's Announcements

### SERVICES IN LIMES ROOM

10.00am Worship and Communion  
Speaker: Ps. Rex Meehan  
"Breaks in Fellowship"

6.00pm Prayer Meeting

7.00pm Inspiration Rally  
Speaker: Ps. Rex Meehan  
"Release through Giving"

Tonight's offering will be dedicated towards our overseas missions programme in Papua New Guinea, Singapore and Japan.

### MEETINGS AT THE CHURCH

10.30am Children's Church

3.00pm Water Baptism Service

## Next Sunday's Meetings

### SERVICES IN THE LIMES ROOM

10.00am Worship, Communion and Right Hand of Fellowship  
Speaker: Ps. Meehan

7.00pm Inspiration Rally  
Speaker: Ps. Meehan

### MEETINGS AT THE CHURCH

10.00am Children's Church

## Mid-week Meetings

Tues 3 7.30pm House groups around the city.

Wed 4 5.30pm House group teachers' briefing.  
7.30pm Public Prayer Meeting at the Church.

Thurs 5 10.00am Ladies Group. No visitation. Please meet at Church.  
7.30pm Talk on Church Life and membership at the Church.  
7.30-9.30pm Soapbox Coffee Bar Outreach, Bishopdale Community Centre.

Fri 6 7.30pm House Group.

Sat 7 9.00am-8.00pm GET TOGETHER DAY at Memorial Hall, Lincoln College. Everyone welcome. Programmes available at the door. Contact Allan & Joyce Collins or Pat Blake if you require transport.  
7.30pm Young People meet at the Church.

CAMPS: The House Groups have informally grouped together for fellowship weekends. If you don't belong to a group, join one for the weekend. Have fellowship and fun with these folk. Contact the person in charge of each camp.

Oct 6-8 John Harrison

Oct 27-29 Alex Neas

Any announcements for this sheet.

Please contact Pat Blake ph. 555-159 by Wednesday this week.

\* FORMS 1 & II BIBLE CLASS during the sermon.

"The Challenge", New Zealand's Christian Weekly Newspaper can be purchased from the bookstall for 15¢.

## Personal

This weekend a number of our House Groups have combined together for a camp at Glentui. Gwen Hopkins in in Calvary Hospital.

David Taylor is in Ward 23 Public Hospital.

Place in Christian flat required. Contact Noel Minogue 517-452.

Next Sunday we will be giving the Right Hand of Fellowship to those wishing to commit themselves to the life and ministry of our assembly. Introductory talk at the Church 7.30pm this Thursday 5 October.

EXAMS: Please pray for the following who sit exams this week:

Margaret Julian	2 Oct
Mahalia Bongers	2 Oct
Sharon McNeil	2-6 Oct
Kit Grenon	2-6 Oct
Alison McDonald	2-9 Oct
Erin Soanes	6 Oct Pathology
Liz Lees	4 Oct pm Measurement Evaluation

STUDENTS: If you are sitting exams (from School Cert upwards) please write in the details on the form on the notice board as we are compiling a prayer list.

Anyone wishing to have their financial giving to Church programmes recorded for tax concessions please see Onslow Thirkell who will be happy to provide you with a number and a supply of envelopes.

TAPES are made of every meeting and can be borrowed at no cost. Just fill in the forms at the door and hand to Michelle Cain.

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